STAR TREK: LOWER DECKS SECRETS UNCOVERED

STAR TREK EXPLORER

THE LIFE & LEGACY OF RO LAREN

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE #12

Top Ten *Star Trek* Moments!

The saga's defining stories and events

Lost to Eternity

Don't miss our prequel adventure to the latest *Star Trek* novel!

BEHIND-THE-SCENES

Exclusive Interviews!

STAR TREK: LOWER DECKS CREATOR,

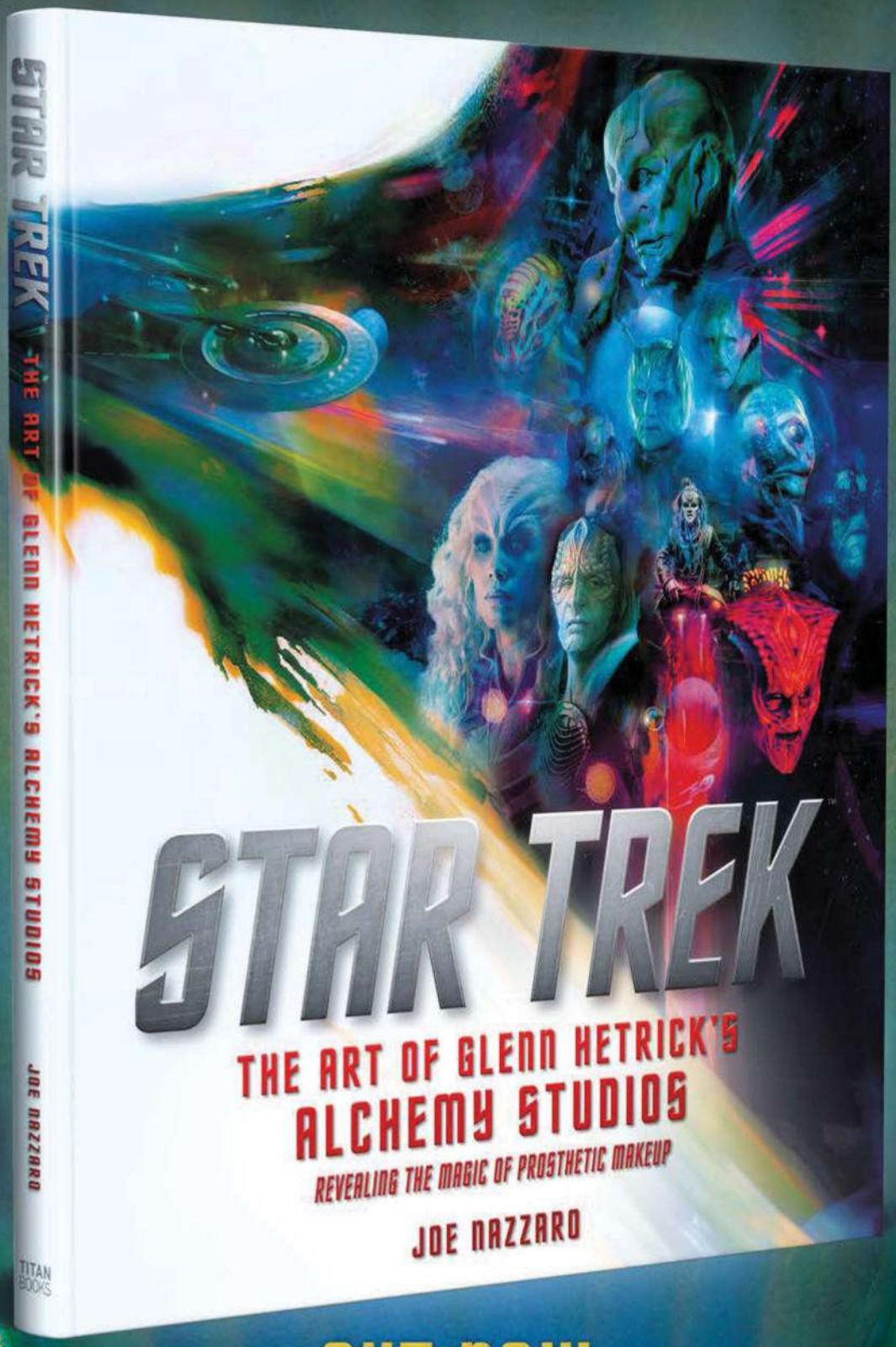
MIKE MCMAHAN

STAR TREK: STRANGE NEW WORLDS CINEMATOGRAPHER,

BENJI BAKSHI

NEWS • *STAR TREK: DISCOVERY* DEFINITIVE GUIDE • TREKNOLOGY

Revealing the magic of prosthetic makeup with Glenn Hetrick's Alchemy Studios!



OUT NOW

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Captain's Log

Along with this issue's exclusive interviews, including *Star Trek: Lower Decks* creator Mike McMahan, there's one particular item this issue I'm especially pleased about, and that's a special prequel to the latest novel from Greg Cox, *Lost to Eternity*.

By now, there are many of you out there who will have already picked up Greg's adventure, set across three *Star Trek* "movie eras", offering plenty of intrigue and action. "Housewarming" sets the scene, giving you a wonderful "prequel" centered on Captain Sulu and Lieutenant Commander Saavik, with a touch of very early Original Series episodes, perhaps, thrown in.

Complemented by another standout frontispiece from Pete Wallbank, I do hope you enjoy the story as much as I did. Alongside our *Star Trek: Discovery* tale, "The Sirius Snarl", by Keith R.A. DeCandido, illustrated by Mike Collins, I think we've done ourselves proud in the fiction department this issue.

Of course, there's plenty more to enjoy, too, not least our guide to *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* Season Two, in advance of that show's return next year; and a fascinating interview with artist Kavita Maharaj, as well as other exclusives you'll only find in print here, in *Star Trek Explorer*.

Enjoy!

John Freeman
Editor

CONTRIBUTOR SPOTLIGHT

Greg Cox

Greg Cox cannot remember when he wasn't a *Star Trek* fan, having watched The Original Series on NBC when he was just a kid. He has been a professional *Trek* fan, writing novels and short stories, for more than thirty years now. His most recent *Star Trek* novel, *Lost to Eternity*, just came out this summer and prominently features Saavik, who also appears in this issue's new story, "Housewarming." Both book and story can be read separately, but Greg likes to think they complement each other. He currently resides in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in the United States.

Louie De Martinis

Louie De Martinis has been a professional artist since the age of 25. In addition to illustrating comics and novels, De Martinis has also worked in animation, and got his start as a layout artist on the animated feature Heavy Metal 2000. He's drawn the *Penny Dreadful* comic book limited series and for *Star Wars Insider*. He's currently providing illustrative work for *Star Trek Explorer*, as well as comic covers for IDW Publishing, including providing the cover art for IDW's 400th *Star Trek* issue, which was nominated for the 2023 Eisner Awards for Best Single Issue/One-Shot. He currently lives in Montreal, Canada.

STAR TREK™ EXPLORER
THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

EDITORIAL
Editor: John Freeman
Designer: Dan Bura
Group Editor: Jake Devine
Art Director: Oz Browne

CONTRIBUTORS
FEATURES: Lou Anders, Chris Dows, Rich Handley, Lisa Herrera, John Kirk, Kurt Anthony Krug, Dan Leckie, Rich Matthews, Larry Nemecek, Jay Stobie,
FICTION: Greg Cox, Keith R. A Decandido, David Mack, Adeena Mignogna
ARTISTS: Mike Collins, Christopher Cooper, Louie de Martinis, Nick Miller, Luca Strati, Pete Wallbank

PARAMOUNT GLOBAL – *STAR TREK* FRANCHISE
Director, *Star Trek* Brand Management: Marian Cordry
Manager *Star Trek* Brand Development: John Doherty
Copyright Promotions Ltd.: Anna Hatjoullis
Paramount Home Entertainment: Kate Addy, Jiella Esmat, Liz Hadley, and John Robson
Simon & Schuster US: Ed Schlesinger

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Assistant Editor: Louis Yamani
Editorial Assistant: Ibraheem Kazi
Production Manager: Jackie Flook
Production Controllers: Caterina Falqui, Kelly Fenlon
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Marketing Coordinator: Lauren Noding
Publicity Manager: Will O'Mullane
Publicist: Caitlin Storer
Publicity & Sales Coordinator: Alexandra Iciek
Digital & Marketing Manager: Jo Teather
Head Of Rights: Rosanna Anness
Head of Creative & Business Development: Duncan Baizley
Publishing Directors: Ricky Claydon, John Dziewiatkowski
Chief Operating Officer: Andrew Sumner
Publishers: Vivian Cheung, Nick Landau

DISTRIBUTION
US Newsstand: Total Publisher Services, Inc. John Dziewiatkowski 630-851-7683
US Newsstand Distribution: Curtis Circulation Company
US Bookstore Distribution: The News Group
US Direct Sales: Diamond Comic Distributors
Canadian Distribution: Curtis Circulation Company
Australia/New Zealand Distribution: Gordon & Gotch
UK/US Direct Sales Market: Diamond Comic Distributors
UK Newsstand: Marketforce mfcommunications@futurenet.com

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STAR TREK EXPLORER MAGAZINE
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Our digital extra for subscribers includes two brand new *Star Trek* stories – "The Simulation", by Adeena Mignogna, a special tale inspired by the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* story, "The Inner Light" and "Memoriam", by David Mack. Plus, re-presented archive interviews with *Star Trek* writer DC Fontana and director Cliff Bole

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Engage!

EXPLORING THE *STAR TREK* UNIVERSE

REPORTING TEAM: JAY STOBIE

Star Trek: Starfleet Academy Is In Session!

Star Trek rocked its main panel at this year's San Diego Comic Con with the announcement that legacy cast members Tig Notaro, Mary Wiseman, and Oded Fehr of *Star Trek: Discovery*, as well as *Star Trek: Voyager*'s Robert Picardo, will be reprising their roles in *Star Trek: Starfleet Academy*. Notaro (Jett Reno) and Picardo (The Doctor) have signed up to be series regulars, while Wiseman (Sylvia Tilly) and Fehr (Admiral Vance) are set as guest stars.

These illustrious actors join what is shaping up to be an out-of-this-world ensemble. Multi-talented comedian Gina Yashere (*Bob Hearts Abishola*) and Oscar nominee Paul Giamatti have been recruited as recurring guest stars on the series, while Academy Award winner Holly Hunter will play the Academy's captain and chancellor. As the first season's antagonist, Giamatti will face off against a group of cadets that will include characters played by Kerrice Brooks (*My Old Ass*), Bella Shepard (*Wolf Pack*), George Hawkins (*Tell Me Everything*), Karim Diané (*One Of Us Is Lying*), and Zoë Steiner (*Significant Others*).

The series, whose premiere episode is written by Gaia Violo, follows young cadets who pursue optimism and train to become Starfleet officers as a new enemy emerges to threaten the Federation.

• More new *Star Trek* updates next issue!

The Captain's Quarters!

Captain Pike himself has offered hints as to what to expect from *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*' third season. Anson Mount posted a video tour of his trailer online and described an episode he was about to film as, "Something different. Something I've never done before." Mount offered a further tease on X, where he playfully wrote, "I will say this about season three of *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*: Cosplayers, you better be ready to bring your A-game." *Star Trek* fans will surely relish the chance to dive into season three and prove that they are up to the captain's challenge!

The Maniacal Moopsy

Star Trek: Lower Decks set the Moopsy free in the fourth season installment "I Have No Bones Yet I Must Flee," and the fandom has been in a frenzy ever since. While the Moopsy appears cute and cuddly, its ability to drink bones even rattled the always resolute Beckett Mariner. Fortunately, the Master Replicas Moopsy Plush 10-inch plush only replicates the creature's cuddly side! Add the Moopsy to your own Miraculous Menagerarium at MasterReplicas.com

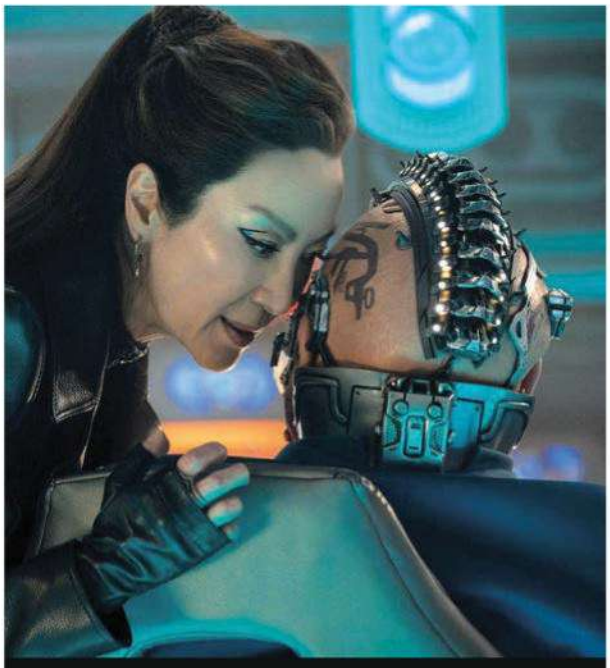
A Federation of Faces

Star Trek: Discovery and *Star Trek: Picard* featured a host of fan-favorite species from previous incarnations of *Star Trek*, ranging from Andorians and Orions to Tellarites. Other species – such as the Saurians, Betelgeusians, and Breen – received the spotlight to a greater extent than ever before. Perhaps most notably, these prolific series also added to *Star Trek*'s diverse tapestry by welcoming brand-new species into the franchise. Saru's Kelpiens, Cleveland "Book" Booker's Kwejian, Commander Nalas' Akoszonam, Species 10-C, and the Beta Annari bodyguard Mr. Vup reflect a mere handful of the series' amazing original designs.

Star Trek Comics Anew

IDW Publishing and Paramount Global have confirmed an extension of the partnership between the two companies to continue their mission of exploring the vast and imaginative *Star Trek* universe in the comic book medium.

"*Star Trek* is not just an iconic franchise, but a universe that celebrates diversity and creativity," remarked Davidi Jonas, CEO of



Star Trek: Section 31 incoming

As announced at San Diego Comic Con, the Michelle Yeoh-led *Star Trek: Section 31* streaming movie is set to debut in early 2025. The techno-infused teaser revealed that Miku Martineau (*Kate*) will be playing a young Phillippa Georgiou, joining a stellar cast of Omari Hardwick, Kacey Rohl, Sam Richardson, Sven Ruygrok, Robert Kazinsky, Humberly Gonzalez, and James Hiroyuki Liao. Rohl portrays a younger version of Rachel Garrett, the future captain of the *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC 1701-C, while Richardson's character is a Chameloid, a shapeshifting species originally featured in *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*.

Paramount Pictures has also confirmed that an "Untitled *Star Trek* Origin Story" film set decades before *Star Trek* (2009) is being directed by *Andor* director Toby Haynes. With these buzz-worthy developments, the future of *Star Trek* remains as optimistic as a Federation utopia.

Star Trek: Prodigy Season Two Ushers in a *Star Trek* Future!

With the riveting conclusion to *Star Trek: Discovery*'s final season still fresh in our minds, fans had their call for even more *Star Trek* answered when Netflix debuted *Star Trek: Prodigy*'s much-anticipated second season worldwide, on July 1st, to much acclaim.

"*Prodigy* Season Two is everything the world needs right now," enthused *Star Trek* designer David Blass on X. "It's everything good about *Star Trek*. Aaron J. Waltke and the team nailed it. Best five hrs you will spend this year!"

The enthusiasm surrounding the return of *Prodigy*'s beloved cadets has kept the fandom abuzz, and many viewers have shared hopes for renewal for a third season.

IDW Media Holdings. "The *Star Trek* community is one that we're proud to serve and be part of."

A Comedic Quadrant

Announced in a surprise reveal at San Diego Comic Con, filmmaker Justin Simien (*Dear White People*) and *Lower Decks*' own Tawny Newsome (who is also a writer on *Starfleet Academy*) are in the early stages of developing *Star Trek*'s first live-action comedy series. The series will focus on Federation outsiders serving a resort planet who find out their day-to-day lives are being broadcast to the entire quadrant. In addition to being the show's co-creators, Simien and Newsome will executive produce the series alongside Alex Kurtzman, Aaron Baiers, Rod Roddenberry, and Trevor Roth.

Star Trek's Animated Adventures

Star Trek: Lower Decks returns with a two-episode premiere on October 24th as the series' fifth and final season finds the *U.S.S. Cerritos* crew tasked with closing anomalous subspace rifts and an abundant assortment of interstellar shenanigans. As you await those animated adventures, you can currently purchase *Star Trek: Prodigy*'s second season on Digital. *Prodigy*'s second season is also coming home to DVD and Blu-ray on November 12th, and those physical releases will come complete with all-new special features to enjoy.

The Return of Roger Korby

With its third season targeting a 2025 release and a fourth season renewal already announced, *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* has added another classic character to its cast. Cillian O'Sullivan (*In From The Cold*) will

be a recurring guest star in season three and play Dr. Roger Korby, a legacy character first played by Michael Strong in *Star Trek*'s "What Are Little Girls Made Of?"

The Peabody Awards and Pinewood Studios Honor *Star Trek*

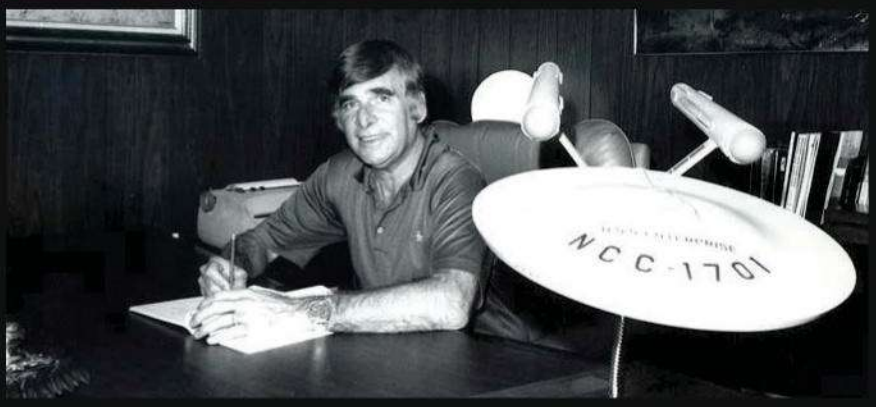
Star Trek continues to collect accolades, as the Peabody Awards bestowed its vaunted Institutional Award upon the franchise, commending it for "its enduring dedication to storytelling that projects the best of humanity into the distant future." *Star Trek* was also recognized by Pinewood Toronto Studios, where one of the sound stages used to film *Star Trek: Discovery* was renamed "The *Star Trek* Stage." Executive producer Alex Kurtzman praised Pinewood, stating "we've benefitted from working with the talented artists in front of the camera and behind the scenes and look forward to our partnership in Toronto on future series."

The Aesthetics of Prosthetics

Published by Titan Books and scheduled for a September 2024 release, *Star Trek: The Art of Glenn Hetrick's Alchemy Studios* supplies analysis and insight into the creativity that Glenn Hetrick and his team invested in creating sentient species and creatures over the course of *Star Trek: Discovery*'s five seasons. Written by Joe Nazzaro, the hardcover coffee-table book is fully illustrated with art and behind-the-scenes photography, contains interviews with Hetrick and his Alchemy Studios colleagues.

If you can't wait to marvel over *Star Trek* art, Titan Books' *Star Trek: Picard – The Art and Making of the Series* also available. Penned by Joe Fordham, this tome pairs a voyage through *Star Trek: Picard*'s makeup, costumes, art, and visual effects with on-set photography and production art from the series. Interviews with the cast, showrunners, writers, and other crew make this hardcover a can't-miss addition to any fan's bookshelf.

The Roddenberry Fleet



Much like the *U.S.S. Voyager* after it disappeared in the Badlands, the three-foot model of the *U.S.S. Enterprise* from the original *Star Trek* pilot was long-considered lost to history. Famous for its placement on creator Gene Roddenberry's desk, the model was recently discovered and submitted to Heritage Auctions, where a team which included *Star Trek* production luminaries Mike Okuda, Denise Okuda, and Doug Drexler successfully verified its authenticity.

The filming model is now owned by Eugene "Rod" Roddenberry, Jr., the CEO of Roddenberry Entertainment and an executive producer on the current slate of *Star Trek* series, who outlined the *Enterprise*'s future on social media. "We look forward to restoring it, and making it available at some point in the future for everyone to appreciate and enjoy," wrote Roddenberry, Jr. "Also, pleased to report that I did not, in fact, throw this model into the pool when I was a kid."

The Roddenberry fleet has also bolstered its ranks in another fascinating way, as virtual tours of Deep Space 9's Promenade and the *U.S.S. Discovery*'s bridge have been added to The Roddenberry Archive's breathtaking lineup of ship models and interiors. Created in collaboration with Paramount and OTOY, the entire experience can be found online at Roddenberry.x.io or through your Apple Vision Pro. You can also preview the promenade tour with "*Deep Space Nine*: A Stroll Down the Promenade," a documentary narrated by Quark actor Armin Shimerman that is currently available at YouTube.com/@OTOY.

More on this project in our "Engage Extra:" this issue

A Subspace Soundtrack

Lakeshore Records has released a vibrant, double-sided vinyl album of the original songs from *Star Trek*'s smash-hit musical episode, "Subspace Rhapsody". Performed by the entire *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* cast and written by Tom Polce and Kay Hanley of Letters to Cleo fame, the 11 original recordings are accompanied by the special renditions of the *Strange New Worlds* opening and closing themes that were specially tailored for this very episode.

• "Connect to Your Truth" now, – dance over to LakeshoreRecordsShop.com

Fanhome announces new *Star Trek* Starships model collection

Fanhome has unveiled a new official *Star Trek* Starships model collection, which launched this November, offering a new die-cast model starship every month. The collection will debut the *U.S.S. Titan* NCC-80201-A, Captain Shaw's *Constitution III*-class vessel from *Star Trek: Picard*.

Expect a comprehensive range of models to follow, encompassing all modern *Star Trek* series. The first ships to be released include the *U.S.S. Stargazer* NCC-82893, the *Sagan*-class ship helmed by Rios in season two of *Star Trek: Picard*, and *U.S.S. Farragut* NCC-1647, whose crew includes a young James T. Kirk serves on during the *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* era.

The range is being supervised by Ben Robinson, who has worked on hundreds of similar models, and will be the same scale as previous collections. The models, available either individually or on subscription from Fanhome, are meticulously crafted from a mix of die-cast metal and high-quality resin, with typical sizes ranging from seven to nine inches in length.

For major ships, Fanhome is offering XL-sized models approximately 11 inches long at a higher price. Paramount Global collaborates closely with Fanhome to ensure these models are accurate representations, based on the original visual effects models used in the shows.

Accompanying each model is a 16-page magazine providing an in-universe profile of the ship, insights into the design process, exclusive art, and fresh interviews with the production team.

To stay updated on release dates, pre-order opportunities, and future releases, visit fanhome.com and register your interest

In the Cards

Assemble your away team for an iconic game of UNO with UNO Fandom's *Star Trek:* The Original Series Game Deck, which includes 112 premium–quality cards, features special Starfleet-approved rules, and is available now at Creations.Mattel.com. You can also 'deck' out your collection with theory11's *Star Trek* Playing Cards. Covered in custom artwork depicting the likenesses of Captain James T. Kirk, Spock, Nyota Uhura, Hikaru Sulu, and other *U.S.S. Enterprise* crew members as they appear in the Kelvin Timeline films, you can get a great 'deal' on theory11's *Star Trek* sets at Store.Theory11.com.

Welcome to the Kelvin *U.S.S. Enterprise*

Yet another pivotal film reaches a monumental milestone, as 2024 marks 15 years since *Star Trek* (2009) introduced the galaxy to the Kelvin Timeline. Hiya Toys channels the thrilling installment with Exquisite Mini 1:18 Scale Action Figures modeled after James T. Kirk, Montgomery Scott, Dr. McCoy, Keenser, both Spock *and* Leonard Nimoy's Spock Prime, and more. Each figure measures over 4 inches in height, has 17 points of articulation, and comes with accessories.

• Check out the figures at EntertainmentEarth.com

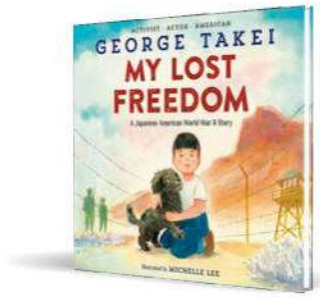
Brewed for Your Crew

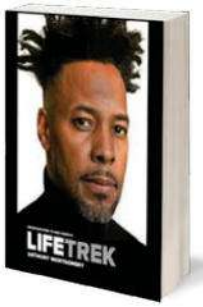
From Kirk to Janeway, starship captains have always fueled themselves with coffee – both real and replicated. Pop Culture Coffee's new *Star Trek*-branded coffee blends are inspired by characters, cultures, and ships from around the franchise. Their initial batch of curated blends are Captain's Choice – a smooth medium roast packaged with Captain James T. Kirk's visage – and Vulcan Vanilla – a full-flavored Madagascar vanilla roast bearing Spock's likeness. Upcoming blends include Klingon Raktajino, Federation French Roast, and Borg Beans. All of Pop Culture Coffee's *Star Trek* coffees are ethically sourced from unique origins around the world and can be ordered at PopCultureCoffee.com.

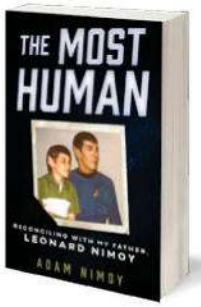
Enterprising Authors

Several *Star Trek* standouts have turned to the written word to express their talents and share personal stories. George Takei (*Star Trek*'s Hikaru Sulu) released his new picture book, *My Lost Freedom*, which focuses on his experiences growing up in Japanese–American incarceration camps during World War Two. Illustrated by Michelle Lee, the author has described the book as, "A story of my family's courage and the importance of staying true to yourself in the face of injustice." You can learn more at PenguinRandomHouse.com.

Anthony Montgomery (*Star Trek: Enterprise*'s Travis Mayweather) own memoir, *Life Trek: From Naptown to Red Carpets*, is scheduled for an August 2024 debut via AnthonyMontgomery.com, while director Adam Nimoy's *The Most Human: Reconciling with My Father, Leonard Nimoy* is now available in print, e-book, and audio formats. Adam Nimoy, who narrated the audiobook version himself, has reflected on his memoir and commented, "My exploration of my relationship with my father and its impact on my life continues…"







Star Trek's Stellar Alumni

As always, our *Star Trek* family members have kept in the news and made a positive impact with their professional and charitable pursuits. Michelle Yeoh earned an incredible honor, receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the United States' highest civilian award, in acknowledgement of her prolific career. From streaming to cable, you can catch Brent Spiner (*Star Trek: Picard*'s Data) reprising his role on the *Night Court* revival and Rekha Sharma (*Star Trek: Discovery*'s Ellen Landry) appearing as a recurring guest on the popular series *The Cleaning Lady*. William Shatner (*Star Trek*'s James T. Kirk)'s documentary, *You Can Call Me Bill*, has also made its way home and can be purchased or streamed on-demand.

Todd Stashwick (*Picard*'s Captain Shaw) rallied his *Picard* co-stars Jonathan Frakes and Michelle Hurd, as well as *Star Trek: The Next Generation*'s own Wil Wheaton, to join him for a *Dungeons & Dragons* livestream to benefit the Pablove Foundation. The Nerd Circus event raised over $52,000 for combating pediatric cancer. Frakes also partnered with *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*'s Kitty Swink and Armin Shimerman, along with *Star Trek: Enterprise*'s John Billingsley, for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network's annual PurpleStride walk.

In Memoriam

Sadly, several members of our *Star Trek* family have passed away in recent months. *Star Trek Explorer* wishes to send its condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of recurring cast members **Kenneth Mitchell** (*Star Trek: Discovery*), Gary Graham (*Star Trek: Enterprise*), and **Michael Barrier** (*Star Trek*); "The Big Goodbye" writer **Tracy Tormé** (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*); original *Star Trek* series guest stars Charles Dierkop and Barbara Baldavin.

Also passed is costume and jewelry designer **Maggie Schpak**, who worked closely with costume designer Robert Fletcher on the first three *Star Trek* films, producing such items as the Kohlinar necklace, and Khan's necklace. She and her studio would eventually work on all thirteen films and four of the original spinoff series, and created items in bulk for sale through Roddenberry Entertainment.

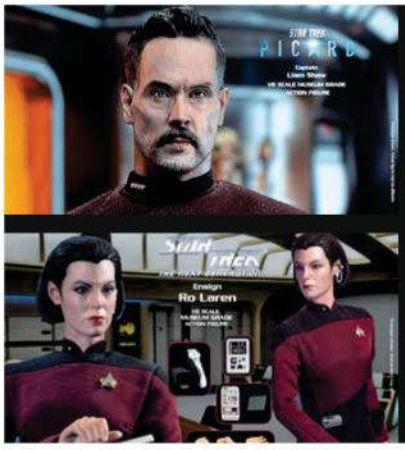
There have been many tributes, too, for an-turned-ambassador **John Trimble**, who – along with his wife, Bjo Trimble – helped ensure that *Star Trek* would return for a third season and ultimately live on through syndication.

• Read our tribute to John Trimble in this issue's "Trek for Life"

The Masterpiece Society

Vice Press continues to release stunning *Star Trek* fine art prints and premium movie posters from the likes of Paul Shipper, Bob Peak, Lyndon Willoughby, Matt Ferguson, and more. From iconic *Star Trek* movie posters remastered by Ferguson, who also serves as Vice Press' Creative Director, to original works and key art from recent series like *Star Trek: Lower Decks* and *Star Trek: Picard*, these hand-numbered fine art lithographs offer spectacular decorative options for any home, office, or collection.

Featuring exclusive designs from international artists, Vice Press' *Star Trek* pieces are produced in limited edition quantities and ships worldwide. The Vice Press team regularly announces its latest *Star Trek* prints and posters on its website, as well as the sales windows for each item. Be sure to bookmark Vice–Press.com, where you can get daily updates and view the wonderful *Star Trek* art that Vice Press has created.



Federation Figures

EXO-6 continues to build on its brilliant *Star Trek* 1:6 Scale line, having added *Star Trek: Picard*'s Captain Liam Shaw, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*'s Ensign Ro Laren, and *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*'s Chief Medical Officer Julian Bashir to its growing arsenal of articulated figures. They join the likes of currently available figures for *Deep Space Nine*'s Major Kira Nerys and *Star Trek: Voyager*'s Lieutenant B'Elanna Torres in an array of collectibles from *Star Trek* series and films. Even more *Picard* figures, a variety of EV suits from across *Star Trek*, and many other surprises are all coming soon in 2024.

Visit EXO-6.com to place pre-orders, browse in-stock items, and sign up for EXO-6's newsletter so that you can be notified about all future releases.

Captain Picard Sets Course for Terok Nor

AZA, the latest novel from *New York Times* bestselling author Dayton Ward, was released in May and greeted with critical acclaim. A *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Deep Space Nine* adventure, the story chronicles Captain Jean–Luc Picard's journey to oversee Bajoran-Cardassian peace negotiations aboard Terok Nor in 2369.

Propelled by a secret that emerges from Cardassian space, Picard must work to prevent Federation–Cardassian hostilities from reigniting. Available in e-book, trade paperback, and audiobook editions from Pocket Books, *Pliable Truths* is available now in all formats at SimonAndSchuster.com and all good bookstores.

Adventures for the Ages

The second edition of Modiphius Entertainment's exhilarating tabletop roleplaying game, *Star Trek Adventures*, refines the rules from the first edition and supplies players with an opportunity to select from non-Starfleet factions, including the Klingon and Romulan Empires. The latest update also incorporates art and design elements from *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, and project manager Jim Johnson states, "I hope new players find the second edition to be a fun game system ideally suited to delivering a worthy *Star Trek* collaborative storytelling experience at the gaming table." Head to Modiphius.net to place your order and learn more about these recent additions.

Engage! EXTRA

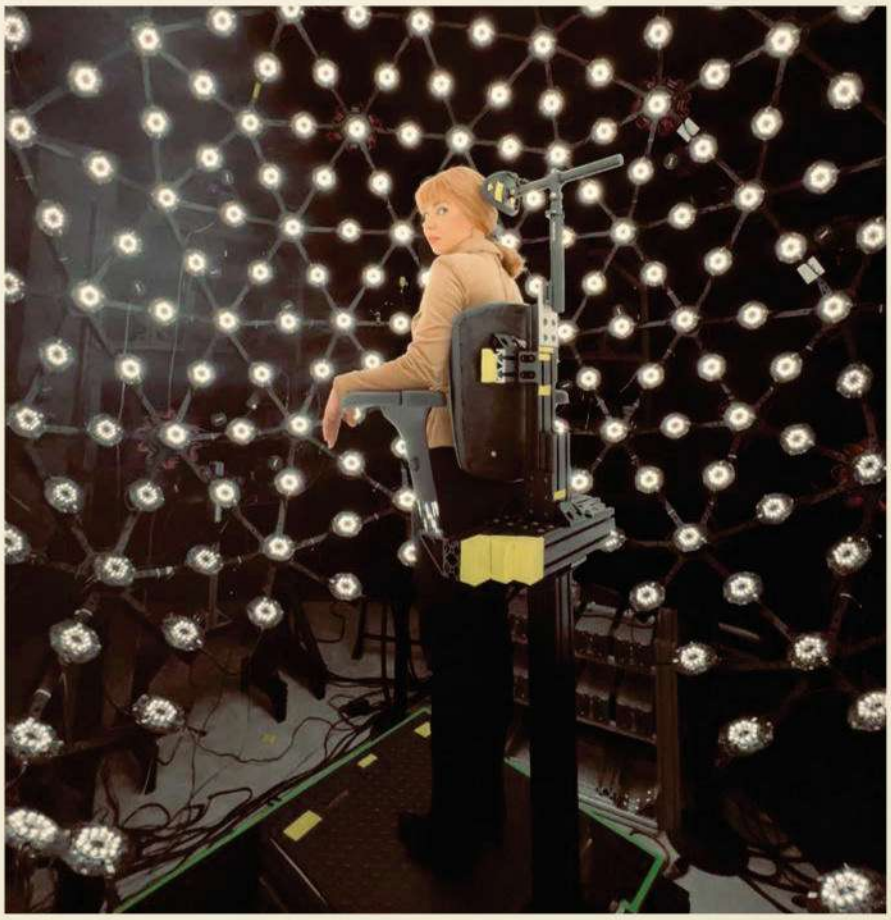
JAY STOBIE

THE RODDENBERRY 'VISION'

The Great Bird of the Galaxy is surely smiling upon us! OTOY, Paramount Game Studios, and The Gene Roddenberry Estate have found the perfect way to preserve and celebrate the legacy of *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry in the form of the new Roddenberry Archive app for the Apple Vision Pro, Apple's spatial computing platform. *Star Trek*'s holodeck was limited only by its occupants' imaginations, and the Vision Pro grants users the capability to transport themselves through immersive 3D environments inspired by the franchise's series and films.

Thanks to the Roddenberry Archive app, visiting Quark's bar on *Deep Space 9* or guiding a craft out of the *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC 1701-D's shuttlebay are no longer out-of-reach experiences. These Vision Pro environments span every era of *Star Trek*, ranging from the original 1960s *Star Trek* series to current productions like the animated smash *Star Trek: Lower Decks*. Gain context for *Star Trek*'s galaxy-spanning scale and explore its massive starships with the app's holographic models and sets. You can marvel as a life-sized *U.S.S. Enterprise* flies over you before opting to take a stroll around the vessel's original 11-foot physical model. Apple SharePlay opens even more possibilities, as your journey through the *Star Trek* universe can be shared and livestreamed with your friends and family.

First released by Apple in June 2023, Apple Vision Pro was described as "a revolutionary spatial computer that seamlessly blends digital content with the physical world, while allowing users to stay present and connected to others." Controlled by a user's eyes, hands, and voice, Vision Pro's three-dimensional interface features an ultra-high-resolution display system and gives



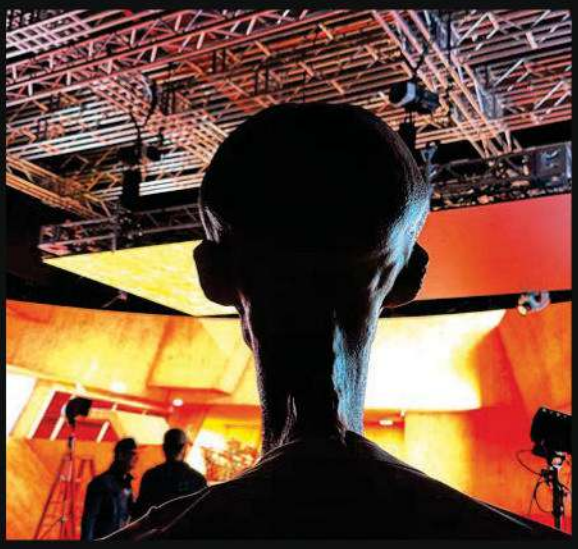
you a chance to interact with digital content, whether that be for work or entertainment. "Vision Pro is years ahead and unlike anything created before," Apple's CEO, Tim Cook, said at the time.

Vision Pro has demonstrated several very *Star Trek*-like features in the past year, such as a three–dimensional camera which utilizes Spatial Audio to permit users to capture and immerse themselves in their favorite memories and moments. Think of The Doctor's interest in holophotography, that was explored in several *Star Trek: Voyager* episodes or the holographic camera Quark deployed to develop his holosuite programs. Much like the holographic communications system used by Odo to contact the *U.S.S. Defiant* in *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*'s "For The Uniform," Vision Pro wearers using FaceTime can be reflected as a Persona, "a digital representation of themselves… which reflects face and hand movements in real time."

Just as the holodeck allowed Starfleet crews to enjoy an infinite number of vacation locales and workspaces, Vision Pro's Environments can expand the scope of a television show or office desk beyond that of your physical room. We all remember the infamous scene where Geordi La Forge and William T. Riker collaborated to envision a unique metal table on the holodeck in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*'s "Schisms," now imagine Vision Pro's endless potential for similar virtual meetings at your own job. The device's Digital Crown even enables you to control the extent to which you are present or immersed in an environment.

The Roddenberry Archive app extends the reach of the Vision Pro's incredible features and fulfills the dreams of *Star Trek* fans around the world. Additional content available through the app includes remastered concept videos and documentaries from OTOY's recent Roddenberry Archives, prolific creators George Lucas and Stan Lee offering their thoughts on Gene Roddenberry's influence on their own epic franchises, and excerpts from OTOY's earlier collaboration with Bruce Timm that involved *Batman: The Animated Series*.

For President of Roddenberry Entertainment Rod Roddenberry, who also serves as an executive producer on Paramount's current slate of *Star Trek* series, the partnership with Apple is particularly meaningful in the way it honors his mother, Majel Roddenberry, who pioneered the franchise's popular characters Number One, Christine Chapel, and Lwaxana Troi while also voicing countless Starfleet computers over the years. "This release also fulfills one of my mother's greatest wishes. She recorded her phenoms in 2008 before her passing, to have her voice live on in posterity. It is deeply moving for me to be able to have her voice now narrate portions of the archive," Rod Roddenberry commented to *Deadline*.



The future for the Roddenberry Archive app is as bright as the utopian society depicted by *Star Trek*, and planned updates are even focused on highlighting the franchise's other mediums. "I am also pleased that the archive can bring to life both published and unrealized influential narrative works from *Star Trek*'s rich literary history, covering my father's one and only *Star Trek* novel for *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* in 1979 through the decades of books and comics that subsequently followed," Rod Roddenberry added in his *Deadline* statement. One can only imagine the possibilities, as in time we may end up stepping through a holodeck arch and stating, "Computer, *begin* program."

THE STAR TREK GUY

STAR TREK: LOWER DECKS CREATOR **MIKE MCMAHAN**

WORDS: KURT ANTHONY KRUG

For *Star Trek: Lower Decks* creator Mike McMahan, *Star Trek* has always been his comfort show.

"My agent used to yell at me – 'Why are you writing spec scripts that take place in spaceships? Those are *expensive*!' 'I don't know. It's where I love to be. Those are the stories and characters that feel like home to me,'" recalled McMahan during a roundtable interview at New York Comic Con last year.

McMahan – a Chicago native who earned his undergraduate degree in drama from Kenyon College in Gamber, Ohio – won a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Animated Program for his work on *Rick and Morty*. He also co-created the animated comedy *Solar Opposites*.

"I worked on a couple of jobs (including *South Park*) that were fine, but *Rick and Morty* felt like home to me. I was the *Star Trek* guy and the sci-fi guy at *Rick and Morty*. I'd be like, 'All right, in season three of *Stargate: SG1*, they did this… We can do this.' My wife and I used to watch all these serialized sci-fi shows when we were falling in love. I'd never seen *Farscape*, which blew my mind. It's now one of my all-time favorite shows. When you find things that speak to you, you want to tell stories that both honor that and push you in a new direction."

When *Star Trek: Discovery* was being created, producer Aaron Baiers – now the President of Television of Secret Hideout, the production company founded by *Discovery* co-creator and current *Star Trek* godfather Alex Kurtzman in 2014 – offered McMahan a job as a staff writer on the show.

McMahan turned Baiers down flat.

"He was like, 'I'm sorry, but what the (expletive) did you just say?' 'I'm on this show called *Rick and Morty*. It hasn't aired yet, but I really love working on it and I think it's really gonna be special.' 'Your agents are gonna be pissed!' 'I know. Listen, call me during season three when you figure out who's friends and who likes the warp core the most. I don't want to be figuring out these things out in the first place…' 'Yeah, right. Good luck,'" recalled McMahan, laughing.

Once *Rick and Morty* aired, Baiers became a fan. He contacted McMahan again.

"Aaron called me: 'You were right! I love *Ricky and Morty*! Alex loves *Rick and Morty*! Would you just come in and have a conversation with him?' So I did. I went in and told (Kurtzman), 'I love *Ricky and Morty*, but it's not *Star Trek*. It's cynical, it's dark, it's vulgar' – all these great things that I like about *Rick and Morty*. I like all these shows for different reasons.' Alex asked me what kind of show would I want to make, and I literally said to him, 'You're never gonna want to make it.'"

According to McMahan, *Star Trek: Lower Decks* was inspired by the season seven episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* called "Lower Decks." In it, the focus was on four ensigns on the verge of promotion.

"I love how these ships have characters you don't get to focus on. I want to do like a broad Animation Domination-style comedy, but the trick of it is it's also canon and sincerely *Star Trek* and you don't remove that," explained McMahan. "I didn't want to make a show that feels like it could've been called 'Star Blek.' If I'm gonna do a *Star Trek*, I'm gonna do a (expletive) *Star Trek*! To his credit, Alex said, 'We gotta do this show. It sounds awesome!'"

A fifth, final season airs later in 2024, after a successful fourth, which included a crossover with *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*. Boimler (Jack Quaid) and Mariner (Tawny Newsome) went from their animated world into live-action, meeting Captain Christopher Pike (Anson Mount) and Spock (Ethan Peck) in a comedy episode directed by *Star Trek: The Next Generation* veteran Jonathan Frakes.

"There is so much great stuff," said Frakes. "It's very, very funny. It's a delightful and wacky episode that I'm very proud of."

At the time of this interview, McMahan was overseeing production of season five of *Star Trek: Lower Decks*.

01

"ALEX KURTZMAN ASKED ME WHAT KIND OF SHOW WOULD I WANT TO MAKE, AND I LITERALLY SAID TO HIM, 'YOU'RE NEVER GONNA WANT TO MAKE IT.'"

"Do you know how crazy it is that I have a five-season *Star Trek* show? I'm so pumped!" enthused McMahan.

That's not to say McMahan didn't have his detractors when the series was announced.

"When the [*Star Trek: Lower Decks*] trailer first came out, everyone told me I was an (expletive). I knew they were wrong," he said. "There were some shining stars out in the world. YouTube reviewer Jessie Gender [praised it]. I would listen to her reviews and think, 'She *gets* it! We're doing something right. I'm only gonna listen to her reviews. If I ever let *her* down, then I've [expletive] up.'"

"I WAS THE *STAR TREK* GUY AND THE SCI-FI GUY AT RICK AND MORTY."

He also had his own misgivings.

"We only got a two-season pickup in the beginning and season three felt like a miracle. Honestly, a two-season pickup means they pay you for it; it doesn't always air," said McMahan. "When I was an assistant at FOX, I saw them air two episodes of an animated series and then saw it get cut. I've seen people do an entire series – first season pickup and animate the whole thing – then some executive at the network picked up a live-action show that's similar and [the animated series] is sitting on a shelf somewhere. This stuff is never a guarantee."

McMahan encourages fans to watch *Star Trek: Lower Decks* as it's airing; not to wait and binge it at the end of the season and have a marathon.

"Celebrate that you're watching it now! Something you're never gonna do again is watch it when it airs for the first time and be surprised by it. It only happens once," he said. "If you guys are saying it's great and people are watching it and getting (their friends to watch it), we would double our numbers! If you love it, watch it!"

One of the advantages of animation is, it's deciduous, McMahan feels.

02

"I'm not worried about *Star Trek: Lower Decks* because I know how good it is," he says. "I worry about people who put it off and will watch it later," he muses.

"I've told my producer my only fear is we become a cult hit 10 years after we've made it. I want to keep working with Tawny and Jack and Eugene (Cordero) and Noël (Wells). I want to do standalone episodes and I want every bridge crew member to get a deep, funny standalone episode. It's all selfish."

Even when it's smart to do it, McMahan has stated he'll never write the series finale of *Star Trek: Lower Decks*. He'll write season finales, but never the series finale.

"Executives always want me to write this stuff, so a new viewer can understand it and the season finales to feel like series finales, so if it doesn't continue... it doesn't feel like a cliffhanger," he explains.

"Remember when *ALF* originally ended, and they all got surrounded by FBI agents pulling their guns on them and that was the last episode? You never want to be *ALF*!

"As much as they want me to write season finales that are series finales, I just don't think I'll do it, because you want to feel like these characters are gonna keep going, y'know? *Star Trek: Lower Decks* isn't *The Iliad*. It's got a place to go."

Although *Star Trek: Lower Decks* is a comedy, it has its dramatic moments and the characters have heart and soul. McMahan is not under any pressure to make an episode more comedic or vice-versa. The only pressure he gets is the pressure he puts on himself.

"If people were telling me what to do, we wouldn't have a 'Peanut Hamper' episode!" he said. "I'm just always trying to surprise everybody and to do a show that is something you want to go back and watch

01 *Star Trek: Lower Decks* season three: "A Mathematically Perfect Redemption"

02 *Star Trek: Lower Decks* season three "Crisis Point II - Paradoxus"

03 *Star Trek: Lower Decks* creator Mike McMahan

04 *Star Trek: Lower Decks* season three "The Least Dangerous Game"

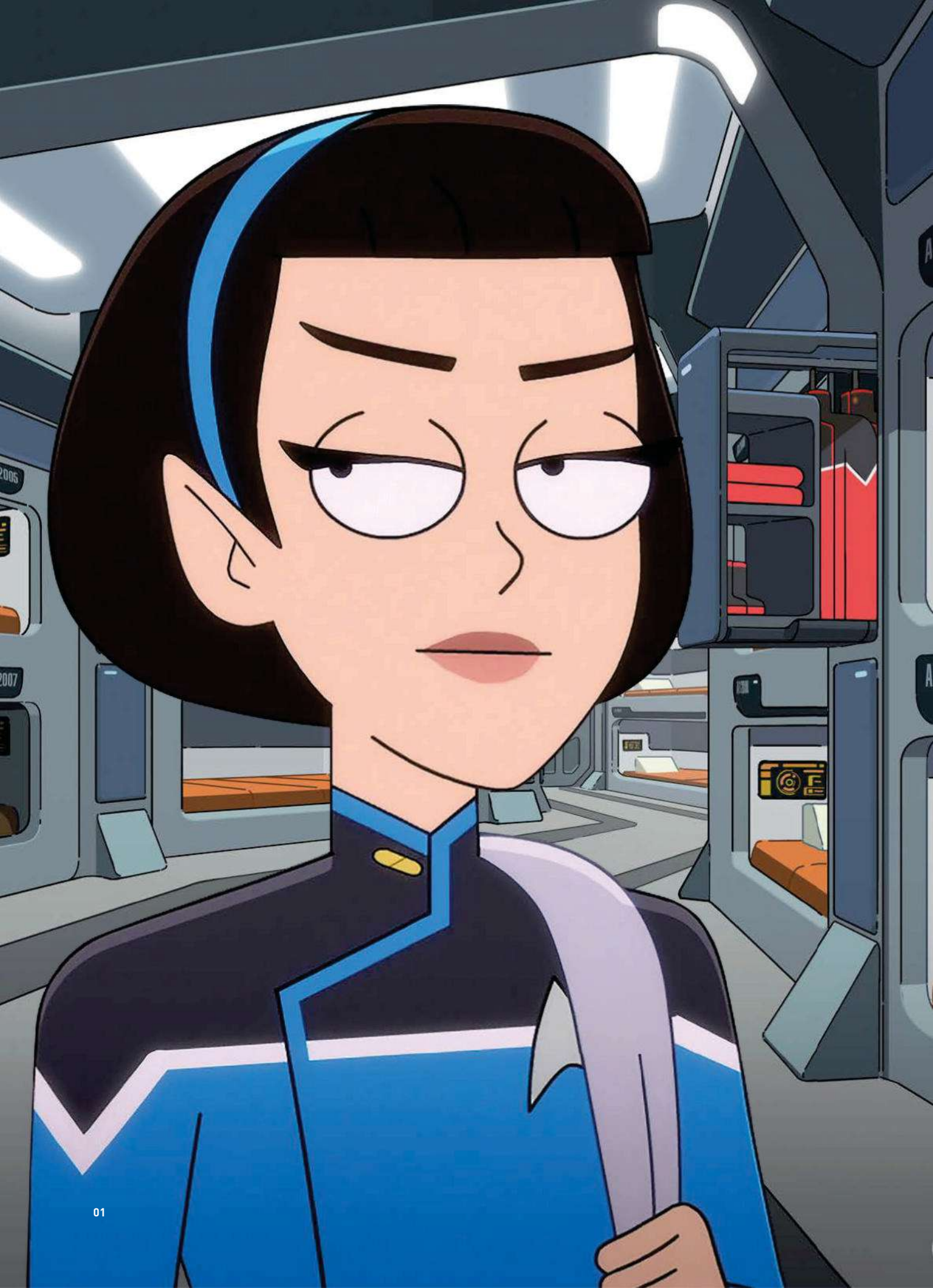
05 *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* season two: "Those Old Scientists"

over and over. To me, that means it can't feel disposable.

"The more you work on a show and the more you learn about it while you're making it, it's like, 'How long will they let me get away with this? I better do the greatest hits of [*Trek*]! We're doing a trial episode! We're doing a holodeck episode!'

"As I've been getting a feel for these characters, how much can this comedy show take on before it starts to feel maudlin? Before you stop having fun? You don't want to go full *M*A*S*H*! Not with every episode.

"The rule of thumb is, if *The Next Generation* was a lot of drama with a little comedy, I'm a lot of comedy with a little drama."



01

THE PLAYFUL VULCAN

With three *Star Trek: Lower Decks* characters under her belt, Gabrielle Ruiz has a lot to be happy about – and despite the cool and collected exterior of the latest addition to the Lower Deckers, the Vulcan Officer, Acting Ensign T'Lyn, John Kirk discovers there's some shared happiness there as well...

WORDS: JOHN KIRK

T'Lyn has captured the hearts of the fans of the animated *Star Trek* show, and I'm glad I was able to sit down with Gabrielle to share with us exactly how the Provisional Ensign manages to add joy, and even a sense of playfulness to this entertaining and hilarious iteration of *Star Trek*.

"It's an absolute pleasure. I'm a born and raised Trekkie. I remember watching *Star Trek* with my mother, who is a real Trekkie, sometimes until I'd fall asleep! Then my dad would come home, after working summers in West Texas, and so my sister and I would bunk up in her room and it was always *Star Trek, Star Trek, Star Trek*!

"My Mother and I were actually talking about *Star Trek: Voyager* when we were doing some press this last season, recalling some of "Tuvix" and stuff, and refreshing, to get facts right! In fact, she said: 'I'm watching it right now!' So, when this role came around, it was important that the audition was as correct as it could be. I needed it to honor Spock and the generations after, and then when it was booked, it was a huge... wow. I'm still reveling in it all."

There's a big source of happiness right there. Fans can sense when an actor truly loves the role. The greatest currency in appreciating a fandom is the authenticity a performer brings to a character and T'Lyn has resonated so powerfully with the fans of this show.

So, the obvious next question had to be what Gabrielle thought she brought to the character? She began by talking about another audition first.

"Originally, I auditioned for Tawny's role – for Mariner!" She began. "I come from Broadway – singer, actor, dancer. What's so cool about voice-overs is that you let it go so easily. It's all instinct. You have a name and know emotional stakes right away and it's so freeing. When this audition came through, there was no *Star Trek* sign on it at all – some Mike McMahan hints, but you could recognize his style anywhere. That's what's really nice, it's to work with what they give you, and it ended up being Mariner with a call-back!

"There *were* some hints about Mariner and I told my husband, 'I think it's *Star Trek*!' And I got really excited. So, I went in for the audition. They give you a script and you have an hour before the audition to read. You leave the script there. It's water-marked with your name on it, right? We read the pilot and Mike was there with Executive Producers. I took the notes as best as I could, got really excited and that was that. But, when you hear Tawny in the role, you're like, yup. That's her. She fit all the notes! Her energy and demeanor were perfect and after watching the pilot, I couldn't help but feel like she made total sense for that character."

01 Acting Ensign T'Lyn *Star Trek: Lower Decks*

02 A scene from *Star Trek: Lower Decks* season four, "Empath-alogical Fallacies"

Gabrielle then took me to the audition that landed her the role for T'Lyn.

"Then they booked me for a number of other characters. I was Ensign Lamont, a computer voice, and I can't express how much I cried. I mean, when I saw my name in the *Star Trek* font – I lost it. Then there was Castro – and there's *such* a lot of attitude in that character. If you know *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend,* then there's a lot of Valencia in her! I was having a blast just being a part of the crew. I got to hang out with Mike in the studio in 2019 and I was even able to have some influence on part of the story with Boimler. The following year, T'Lyn comes in."

Gabrielle paused for a smile at this.

"The audition was so special. Not only did I felt like I got it right, which is a subjective measure of an actor appreciating her craft, but there was Spock, a database, a prestigious and an esteemed tradition to be a Vulcan. I did a *lot* of work and study for this character and listening – because there's a lot of listening in animation and it hit me immediately: T'Lyn is a Vulcan rendition of Mariner. That's what I took, and I remember a season prior that [in the episode "wej Duj"], she kind of flips off her mum with the Vulcan salute and that felt like the moment where she tells her captain to 'live long and prosper, *sir*.' That was the audition scene, and I remember thinking that I had to match that to that – let's put her in a different universe. And you know what? I guessed right! I put some stoic comedy in there and I remembered listening to it and worrying if it was right. But this was special – to me, to my family and I booked it!"

03

04

03 *Star Trek: Lower Decks* season four "In the Cradle of Vexilon"

04 *Star Trek: Lower Decks* season four "Empath-alogical Fallacies"

"I CAN'T EXPRESS HOW MUCH I CRIED. I MEAN, WHEN I SAW MY NAME IN THE *STAR TREK* FONT – I LOST IT…"

It's clear to see what Gabrielle brings to this character. That same spirit of success that marks the nature of the cast of the plucky Lower Deckers is in this story. It's what fans look for in every episode. Despite the challenges set against them, we are always entertained by their ability to overcome adversity and succeed with the values of *Star Trek* in mind.

Then, there's the playfulness.

05

"IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THE AUDITION WAS CORRECT AS IT COULD BE. I NEEDED IT TO HONOR SPOCK AND THE GENERATIONS AFTER…"

"You never hear the giggle that comes out of my mouth *after* I say the line!" She adds. "I always say the line very seriously, technically with intention, with either attitude, sass, brutal honesty – and I always laugh! But the take is always clean, and you never hear my laugh! Because the writing is so funny. It's so much fun to play a stoic "straight man" – I love playing that role. There's a lot of joy in creating T'Lyn. I have a lot of love for her."

I had to ask about what she liked about working with series creator Mike McMahan.

"What a cool guy. Not only does he know what he's doing, but he really loves what he's doing. It is embodied on whatever is printed out on script, ends up on screen and the after – when you talk to him about the show afterwards like in the DVD commentaries – you just know he knows what he's talking about and loves what he's doing. He was there for 'wej Duj', and I'm glad that he was there. He and I walked through it, so that T'Lyn was set up for success and for establishing this character to be a long term one. And the response was out of this world – out of outer space!" She laughed.

05 *Star Trek: Lower Decks* season two "Wej Duj" ("Three Ships")

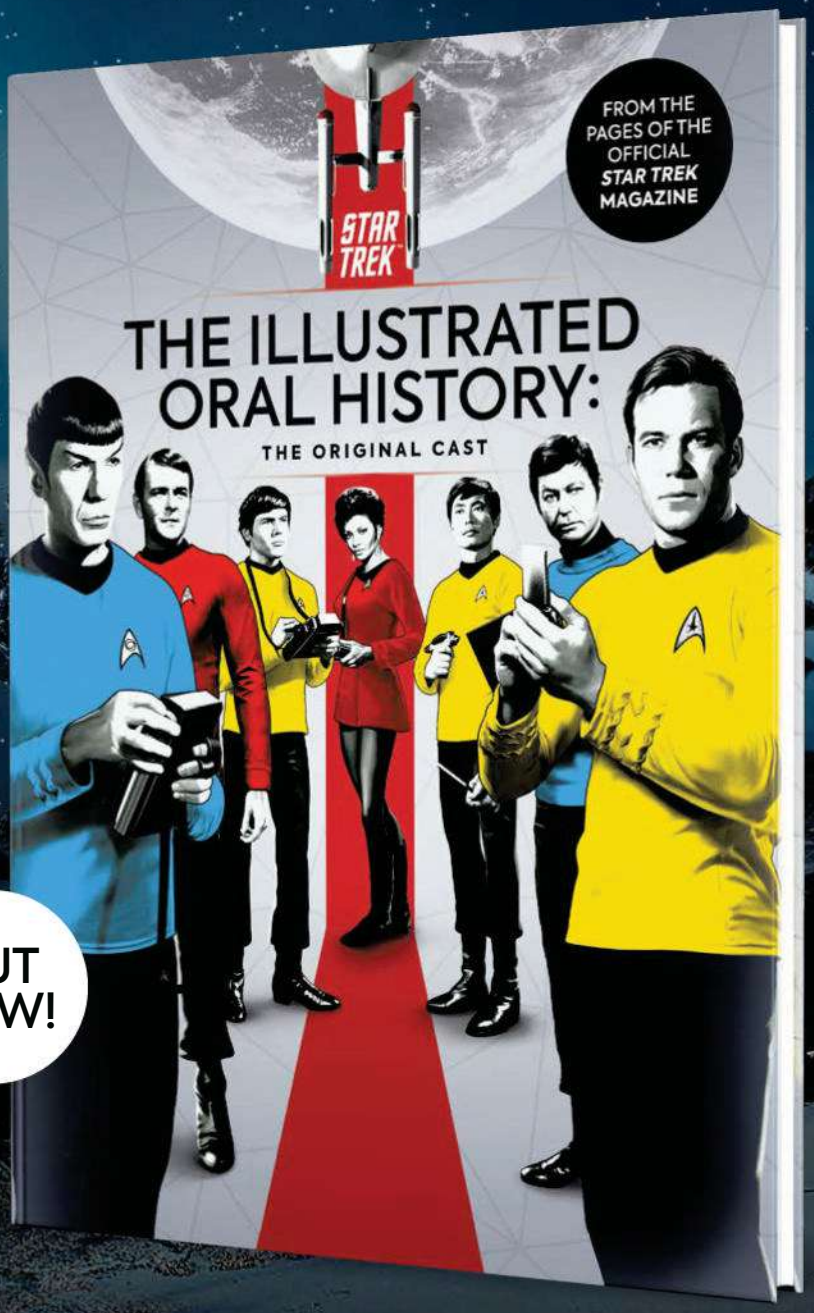
Again, more playfulness. While she and Mike obviously shared a playful attitude together, we asked Gabrielle if there was anyone on the cast she felt drawn to or identified with the most.

"I've worked with Jerry O'Connell, because he's the host of *Pictionary*, as a celebrity guest. We've been able to have fun together outside of *Star Trek*. I've always admired him from his work as a kid and in Hollywood, but drawn to? I feel like I cannot wait to sit down and get to know Tawny! Mariner and T'Lyn just have a lot of parallels and similarities. That scene when she gets to tell me my value – a lot of T'lyn is seen when she's part of the fabulous four and she gives a lot of help in establishing that value. But Tawny and I? I'd feel like we'd get along very well! It was announced that we'll be on the *Star Trek* Cruise together, so we'll see!"

It's the happiness that Gabrielle brings to the role but synergistically, it's also that the role brings happiness to Gabrielle. Love what you do and you'll never work a day in your life, as they say. In this case, this is what makes the difference when we see and hear her performance as the playful Vulcan who brings *Lower Decks* fans so much joy.

- **Gabrielle Ruiz is online at gabrielleruiz.net**
- **Search for "T'Lyn's Most Logical Observations" on StarTrek.com**

THE STORY OF *STAR TREK* TOLD BY THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW IT BEST



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A lavishly illustrated oral history of the *Star Trek* phenomenon featuring interviews with all seven members of the original series cast – William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei, Walter Koenig, and Nichelle Nichols, plus contributions from guest stars, writers and directors – taken from the official *Star Trek* magazine archives.

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TALKING WITH T'VEEN

Dan Leckie catches up with *Star Trek: Picard* actor Stephanie Czajkowski

WORDS: DAN LECKIE

Despite the enormous popularity of *Star Trek: Picard*'s third season, Stephanie Czajkowski (her surname is pronounced "*Check*-house-key") is extremely down-to-earth to speak with. Her character – Lieutenant T'Veen, the *U.S.S. Titan*-A's science officer – appeared in seven of the season's ten episodes. Offscreen, she was deemed three quarters Vulcan and a quarter Deltan.

Star Trek fandom was in Czajkowski's family ever since her childhood. "My earliest memories of *Star Trek* are watching the original series with my dad, while he was doing his homework for college, because he went to night school on weekends when it was in syndication," she recalls. "I was, I think, four. On the weekends, we'd be sitting on this green couch in my living room and it would be on in the background."

Czajkowski landed the role of Lieutenant T'Veen in a conventional way. "There was a character breakdown, like they have for most shows," she elaborates. "My agent got an audition for an undisclosed science fiction series. They had a codename for it and gave me [a small section of script]." Because this was during the COVID pandemic, Czajkowski recorded the audition herself. Her character, at this point, was a "highly astute" science officer who wasn't yet named "T'Veen" and had no species identified. Czajkowski imagined the role as Vulcan, inspired by having watched Spock with her dad. "The next thing I knew, I was walking onto a bridge. When I got there, they're like, 'Of course you're a Vulcan!' and I'm like, 'I guess I am a Vulcan.'"

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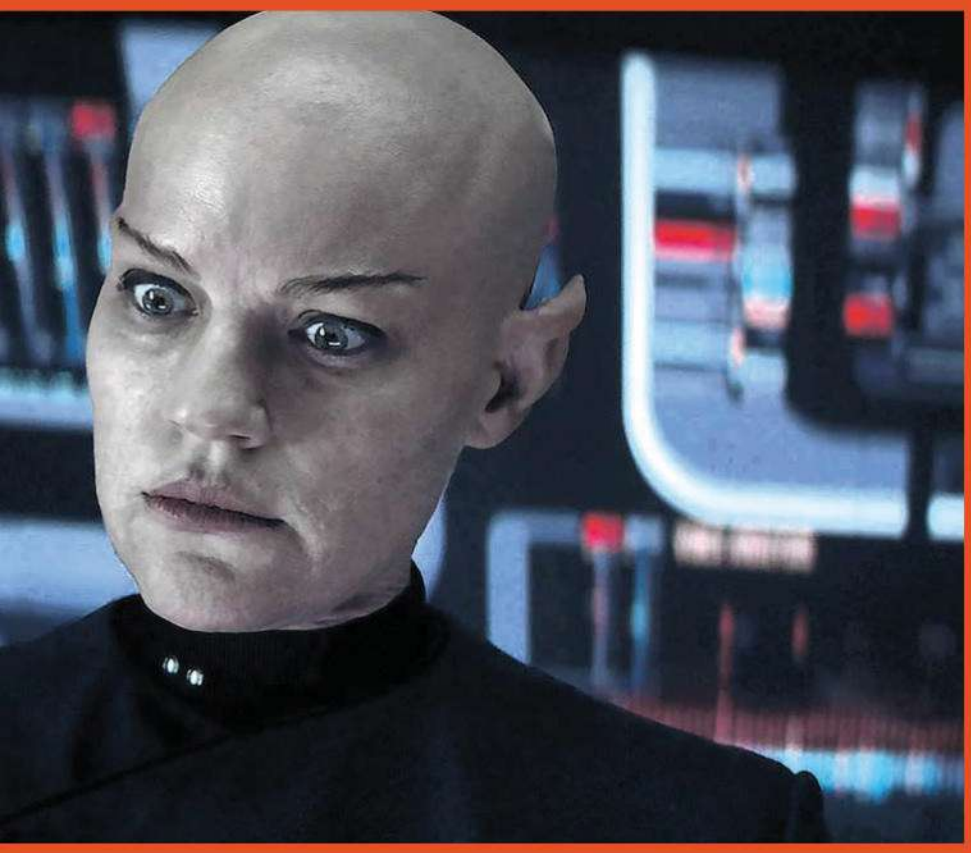


The character was briefly called "V'Leen" but was renamed "T'Veen" to align with female Vulcan names like "T'Pol" and "T'Pau".

Czajkowski researched the history of Vulcan portrayals online, and episodes sent by the show's production secretary. Having an imagined backstory for T'Veen is what Czajkowski describes as "the fun of it, especially if it's *Star Trek: Picard*, not *Star Trek: T'Veen*. I think the danger when playing Vulcans is people tend to think of them as having no emotion. If you look at the history of Sarek, et cetera, it's not that they have no emotion; they've just learned how to suppress emotion because they have a lot of it. So for me, doing that kind of

background work made it really interesting and helpful."

Bald from having chemotherapy a couple of years earlier, Czajkowski had found unique casting opportunities in her look, so she'd kept shaving her head. When she went to the studio for her *Picard* ear and costume fitting, third season showrunner Terry Matalas gave her the option of wearing a Vulcan wig. Czajkowski, inspired by the Deltan Ilia from *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, suggested her character be partly Deltan to explain her baldness. "Terry was like, 'Great idea. Let's make her quarter; let's say her grandmother was Deltan,' and I was like, 'Awesome!'" Of the character's mixed genealogy, Czajkowski notes, "That was really interesting stuff to play with as an actor, even though you don't necessarily see it play out on screen, I guess."

01 Stephanie Czajkowski as *Star Trek: Picard*'s, Lieutenant T'Veen

02 *Star Trek: Picard*, season three, "Dominion"

03 *Star Trek: Picard*, season three, "Seventeen Seconds"

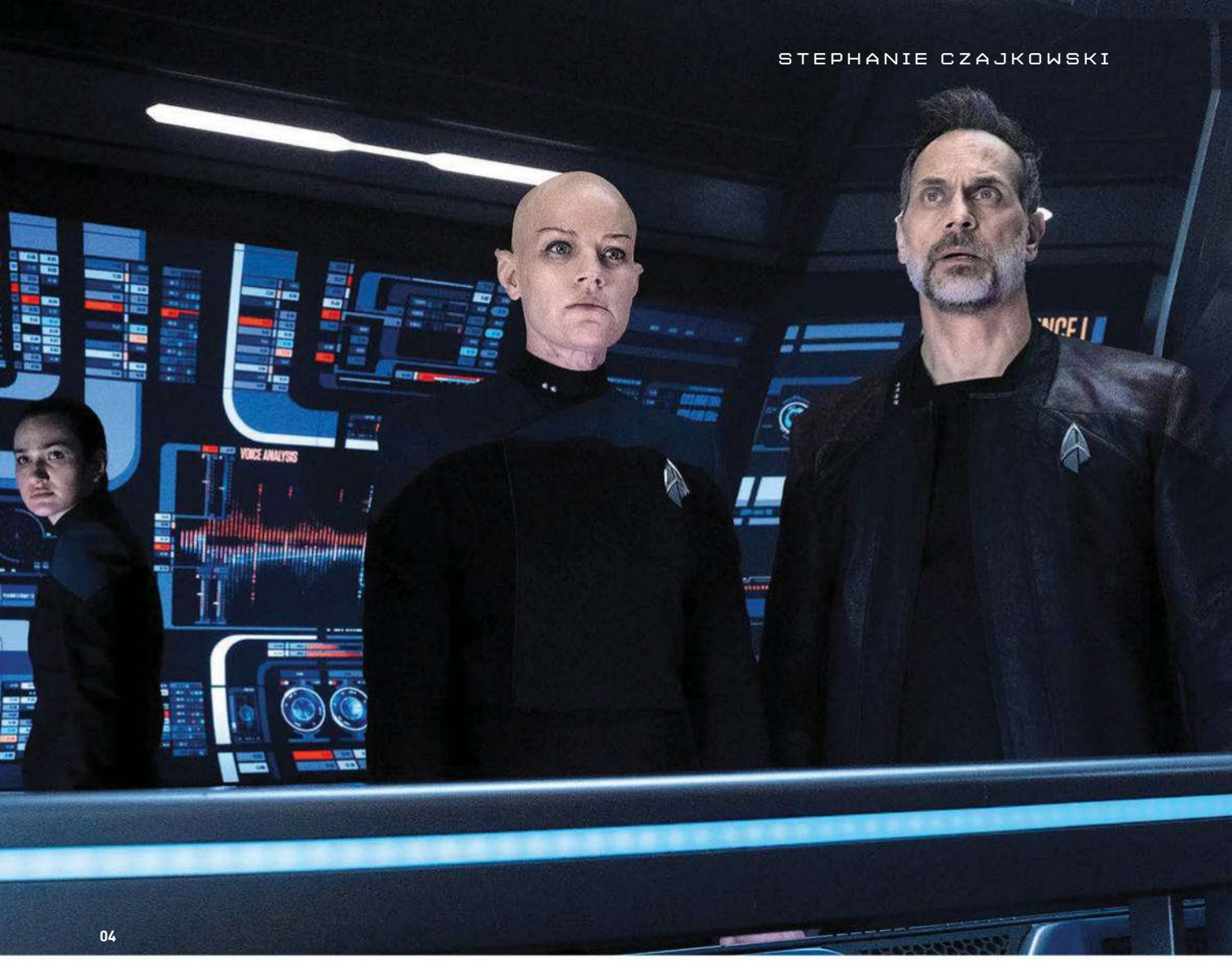
04 *Star Trek: Picard*, season three, "Dominion"

Removing the makeup was much faster than applying it, which usually took two hours. "Every morning, I would come in and get my head fully shaved. Then, they would cover up my natural eyebrows, put on the Vulcan eyebrows and ears, then spray it all to match." To prevent an elf-like appearance, her ears were pinned back.

When Seven of Nine, Picard, and Riker arrive on the *Titan-A*'s bridge, T'Veen is the first character to appear. Czajkowski was unaware the footage would be edited that way, but reflects about the scene, "It's a little surreal when you're sitting there and finally you're like, 'Here we go.' That was the first scene we shot, so that's the first time on set." Although it wasn't Czajkowski's first encounter with Sir Patrick Stewart, she had to convey T'Veen's amazement at meeting Picard, without any lines. Having her station shown first made "logical" sense to Czajkowski, since it was opposite the door where the three newcomers enter.

Czajkowski acknowledges that her theatrical background was beneficial for *Picard*, noting, "We were block shooting, which is very similar to doing longer scenes in a play. What they did was film all the bridge stuff together, so it was like one big scene."

Czajkowski loved working on *Picard*. She reminisces, "Every day, I would look around and recognize that I am on an iconic bridge and that it was only going to last for so long. You find inspiration in the fact that you're lucky enough to do it, because there's ***so*** many people who would love to be sitting in that chair." The lines from her audition ended up in "Seventeen Seconds", Season three's third episode.



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"EVERY DAY, I WOULD LOOK AROUND AND RECOGNIZE THAT I AM ON AN ICONIC BRIDGE AND THAT IT WAS ONLY GOING TO LAST FOR SO LONG.

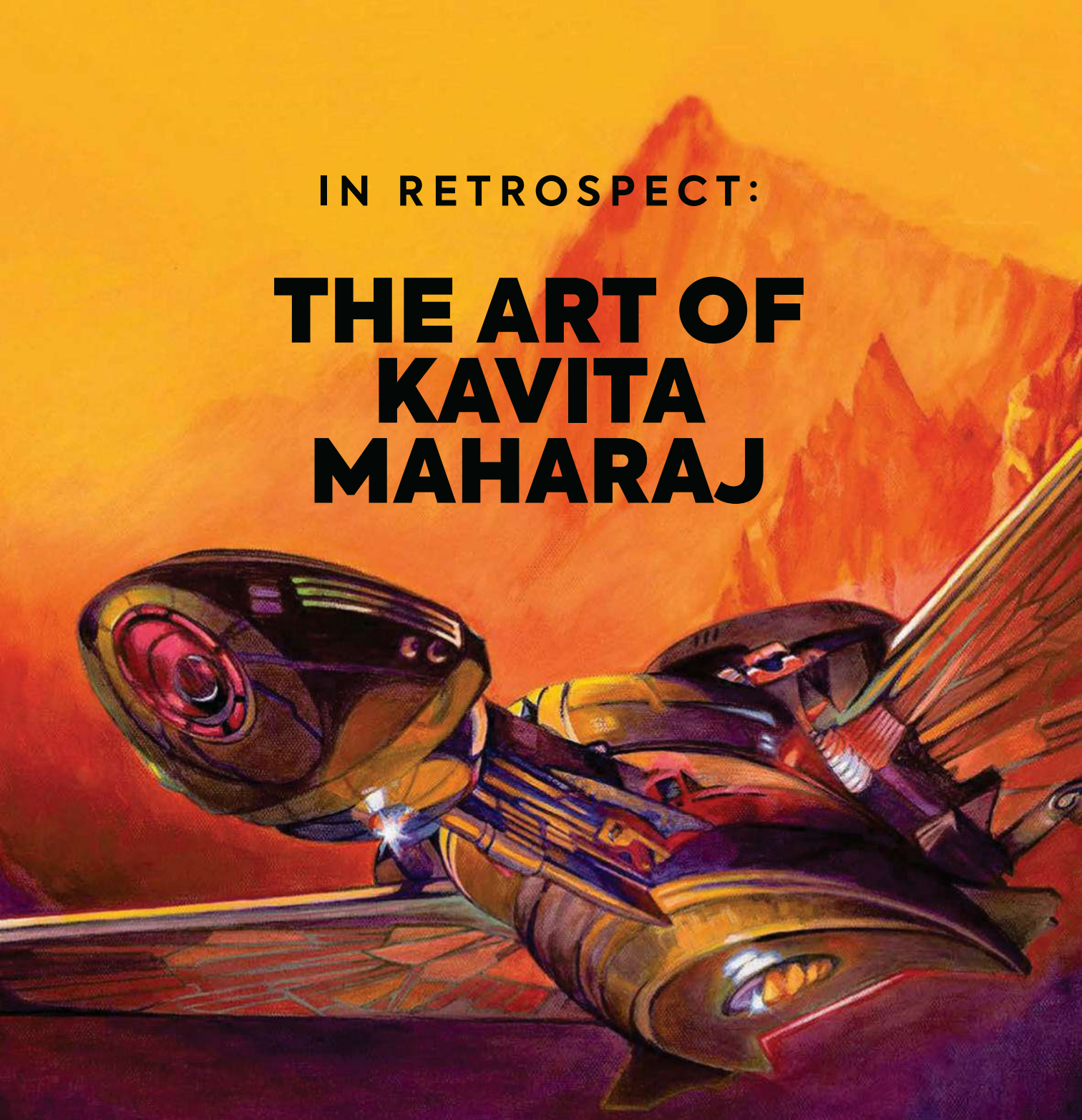
Upon receiving each new script, Czajkowski liked to predict what would happen. However, one plot twist she didn't expect was when T'Veen is suddenly killed by the antagonistic Vadic, in the season's eighth episode, "Surrender". Before reading that script, Czajkowski was informed about the death by Deborah Kampmeier, the episode's director. "She was prepping for the block and had reached out to be like, 'Hey. How do you like to work? I was so gutted when she was going to be executed,' and I was like, 'What?!'" Upon reading the script, Czajkowski understood Kampmeier's message.

Czajkowski was disappointed not to make it to the end. "But I think it also was a really strong choice for the storytelling, and as much as you want to be alive, it's a gut punch when she gets killed and it's nice that it matters," she remarks. "So, it's a tossup. Like, you don't want to die because you want the possibility of reviving the character, but also at the same time, you are a part of this bigger story, and I trust my showrunner and the writers implicitly, and I think that they crafted a really, really good season. So, even though she dies, I think that it was," she takes a moment to laugh, "well executed, as it were."

Fans have speculated about how T'Veen could return. Czajkowski has a folder of theories for Terry Matalas, should the proposed television series *Star Trek: Legacy* be approved. "Terry was great about [T'Veen's death], 'cause he was just like, 'Meh, she can have a twin sister or whatever,'" recalls Czajkowski.

She'd jump at the chance to be in any new series. "I mean, I hope there is a way you could reconstitute T'Veen. If not, as he said, maybe she has a sister. Who knows? Maybe the combination of Deltans and Vulcans actually was kind of like Mormons who had lots of kids, and maybe I have multiple siblings," she laughs. "I mean, I would love to be a part of it, of course, because I love those people so much. But more importantly, I just want it to happen. As a fan, I really want to see Seven of Nine be the captain of a ship."

Signing off, she says, "You gotta love a franchise that encourages infinite diversity in infinite combinations. So, I hope everyone keeps spreading that love, because the world could really use it right now."



IN RETROSPECT:

THE ART OF KAVITA MAHARAJ

As the owner of Retrospect Studios, fine artist Kavita Maharaj has channeled her creative talents into stunning paintings that feature a host of characters and starships from throughout the *Star Trek* universe, ranging from Spock and Nyota to the *U.S.S. Enterprise* and a Klingon *Bird-of-Prey*. Maharaj graciously spoke to *Star Trek Explorer* about her artistic journey, the inspiration behind her creative endeavors, her connection to her work, the relationship between art and philosophy, and much more.

WORDS: JAY STOBIE

Star Trek Explorer: Every artist's path is unique. At what point in your life did you know you wanted to pursue a career in fine art? What were your first steps to achieving this goal?
Kavita Maharaj: When I was eight years old, a teacher of mine saw me sketching my own hand during a lull in my classwork. She stopped, asked me if I had really drawn that, then proceeded to show the sketch to the rest of the classroom. She then put it back down on my desk and said, "I want your first painting."

It was the first time I think I'd become aware that someone thought I might actually create professionally in the future, and that idea took root.

Over time, the more art I created, the more I wanted to create. As a teenager, I came to realize that I was an artist, not because it was something that I did, but because it was an inherent expression of who I was. I came to the conclusion that I needed to continue creating throughout my life if I wished to be happy, and I've kept ever faithful to that.

There's a whole galaxy of subjects for you to focus on, yet you chose *Star Trek*. How does the franchise inspire you to express yourself through art?
As a child, I lived in the Caribbean and there were two television channels, one of which only came on the air at 6pm and covered the news before going off air. So effectively, there was only one channel, and I was fortunate enough that this channel showed *Star Trek:* The Original Series in syndication. It captured me thoroughly… particularly the character of Mr. Spock! It's hard to know for sure, but I believe my fascination with *Star Trek* was built initially around watching how the characters handled life's challenges and the ways in which they stood by one another. That may sound strange for a young child to be inspired by that, but truthfully, there was a lot of abuse in my childhood, and I often felt that I was on my own to find a way through it.

When I hit high school, having returned to Canada, I made several friends who were also huge *Star Trek* fans! At this point, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* was on air and I had come to love them both.

My parents, for reasons unknown to me, were not supportive of my love of *Star Trek*, sometimes even expressing anger when I would get excited when the show came on, or when I was invited by friends to one of our little *Star Trek* parties. That didn't diminish my love for the show, but it did cause me to feel that what I loved made me unlovable to them.

A few years ago, I finally decided that I wanted to paint a single piece of my favorite *Star Trek* character, Mr. Spock, to hang in my den. I then proceeded to research photographs of Leonard Nimoy as Spock, to decide which image I would work from. Two years later, I finally told my husband that I couldn't decide. I told him that there were far too many facial expressions, body language positions, etc. that spoke to me to choose from. My husband looked confused and said, "So why don't you just paint a whole bunch of them?". I was blown away… the truth was, it hadn't even occurred to me that I was "allowed" to do that.

"AS A TEENAGER, I CAME TO REALIZE THAT I WAS AN ARTIST, NOT BECAUSE IT WAS SOMETHING THAT I DID, BUT BECAUSE IT WAS AN INHERENT EXPRESSION OF WHO I WAS."

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My husband's supportive suggestion was a huge turning point in unlearning the lesson of unlovability for me, and the beginning of how I ended up becoming a licensed *Star Trek* artist. It really let me just be who I was in my art, and opened up the floodgates of the joy and meaning that *Star Trek* has for me. Now when I paint my Star Trek pieces, they are all about what I value in myself, in life, and in *Star Trek*: nobility, self–mastery, and unconditional love.

Your Spock painting series gained you well-earned praise and admiration from fans around the globe. Do you feel a special connection with Spock? Is there something about the character that motivates you to create?
Leonard Nimoy's Spock is certainly the character that has the most meaning to me. He really is a stoic, and his journey is one of genuine self-mastery and enlightenment. Spock initially approaches his emotional challenges via his intellect, which is something that I too learned to do, as a result of my negative childhood experiences. As Spock moves further along his path, however, he finds an integration between intellect and emotion, as I myself have found through years of contemplation and Yogic self-mastery work. Spock, in my mind, is one of the most noble characters we find in the *Star Trek* universe, and it is that same nobility that I strive to live, especially in the face of life's inherent difficulties.

Each piece that I create is really a "conversation" about the challenge of nobility. Characters are either striving, achieving, or failing to be noble. Each character is inevitably "me" in some way. When fans view the pieces, each character is "them". The piece is meant to make both myself and the viewer look long and hard at ourselves, exploring what it means to be human, and deciding what we are willing to face to become noble. This question of nobility is present even in my ship paintings.

Would you share the early stages of your creative process with us? How do you select a subject, and where do you proceed from there?
Because I'm driven by "conversations" regarding nobility in the human experience, I first usually decide what I want to say about the idea of human nobility. Then, I choose a subject (be it a person or a scene) that expresses my thoughts or emotions regarding that experience. For example, my painting "He'll Die!" focuses upon the moment where one experiences the desperation that arises when all that one cares for is on the brink of being lost. My painting,

"Pure Logic" focuses upon the choice one may make to transcend one's emotions in order to handle life, particularly in times where the stakes are considerable. And my piece, "Paradise Lost" focuses upon the experience in which we are called to act in a way that harms ourself, in order to serve the collective good.

When I choose a specific character to illustrate the conversation I wish to have, at times the scene or episode may be important to the conversation. However, when the painting appears to be a "simple" portrait, it is often the facial expression and/or body language that I am largely using to "converse" with the viewer. In a case such as this, I may spend copious amounts of time looking at various images of the character to find the right expression or mannerism before I begin my piece.

While your work incorporates a variety of styles, your art is primarily created with acrylic paint on canvas. Why were you drawn to that medium, and how do you decide where to mix in other elements?
Acrylic paint is incredibly forgiving! It dries quickly and you can paint over it if you're not happy with what you've done. It's versatile as well. I've had many people mistake my work for watercolors and for oils. The idea that acrylics are "plastic" looking does not have to be true if you understand how to work with them. Another reason that I work with acrylics is that they are significantly less toxic than oils, and so much easier to clean up!

In terms of when I choose to mix in other elements, that is driven mainly by creative necessity. If I wish to create a particular mark or effect that I don't think my straight acrylics can achieve, I'm more than willing to work outside of that box. Art is also experimentation. So at times, I'll go outside of the box just to see what will happen… and if I don't like what happens, I learn and I keep working.

As passionate as you are about art, you also have a strong interest in philosophy. What relationship do you see between the two areas? Which one of your paintings has stimulated the deepest philosophical conversations?
I love this question! I'm actually a Yogi, which is effectively a Stoic, and philosophy is simply the way I approach life. Therefore, it's also the lens through which I approach my art.

Being a Yogi requires that, on a daily basis, I face the questions of "Who am I?", "What is my purpose here?", "How can I be of service to the world around me?", and "How do I transcend my own personal ego to evolve towards enlightenment?". When you understand this, I'm sure it starts making even more sense that my paintings are all about those things. And with this in mind, I think my painting "Paradise Lost" has been one of the pieces that has stimulated the deepest philosophical conversations.

As previously mentioned, "Paradise Lost" is about consciously choosing against self-interest, in order to serve the collective good. This idea is incredibly triggering to the ego, which always wants to put itself in the position of foremost importance. In that painting, Spock forcibly mind-melds with Valeris, causing them both to experience physical and emotional pain that would last a life-time. He does not do this out of malice, but rather to serve needs of the collective good, despite the personal cost to himself.

Your paintings cover a wealth of *Star Trek* history, but is there a moment, character, or starship you haven't tackled yet that you've always wanted to try?
Oooh… that's a big question! The truth is that there are *so many* other moments,

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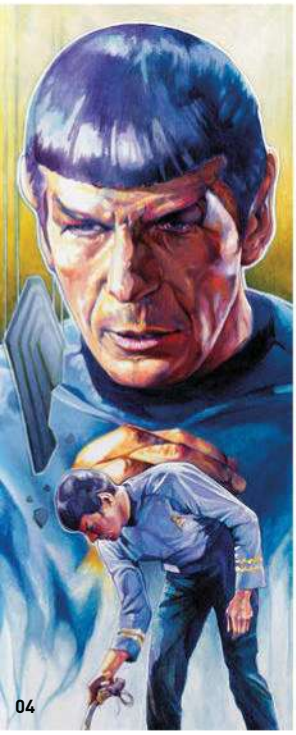
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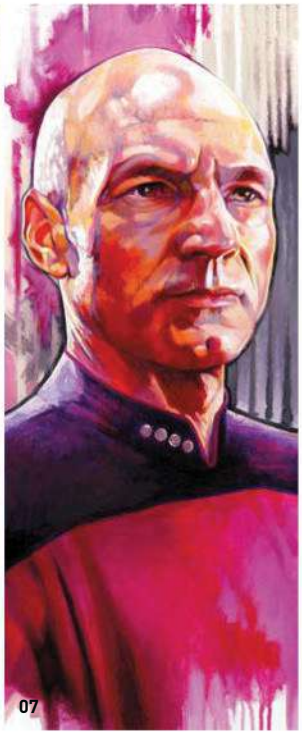
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"I THINK MY PAINTING "PARADISE LOST" HAS BEEN ONE OF THE PIECES THAT HAS STIMULATED THE DEEPEST PHILOSOPHICAL CONVERSATIONS."

characters, etc. that I still wish to approach, because the conversation I want to have about being noble and being human is both broad and deep.

One example of a piece I'd like to approach is that of Chancellor Gorkon from *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*. He is an individual who demonstrates incredible nobility!

He was able to transcend his entire planet's culture and indoctrination to find a more evolved, long-term vision of peace and prosperity for his people, even in the face of substantial racial bias and animosity from those both within the Klingon Empire and the Federation. Even in the moment that he faced his impending death at the hands of rogue federation officers, he does not lose sight of this vision, he did not give into the hate and anger which would have been so natural for the ego, but rather pled with Kirk to fulfill the vision for both of their people's sake. To be this person takes an incredible dedication to the good of the many, despite the pull of one's personal ego.

Fans can purchase your art through the Retrospect Studios website, but you often get to meet them at events and conventions. Are there any interactions you've had with fans related to your work that stand out to you?

I've met so many fans, and have had so many meaningful interactions with them, but there are a few that I can think of immediately when you ask this question:

I have one fan, who I met at *Star Trek* Las Vegas, the first time I was there back in 2019 who has purchased every single *Star Trek* print that I've ever released. Before he purchased the first set of prints, his wife and daughters met me in the vendor's room and they were the loveliest people! Just before they left the convention, his wife came back to my table and gave me a tiny little metal wizard figurine, because she said that she felt I was a "wizard" in my artistry. It was just such a kind and thoughtful thing and I've kept that figurine ever since.

A few years back, I met Judy Burns who wrote for *Star Trek:* The Original Series, at a fan event. She was very taken with my work. She talked quite a bit about the actors that I had portrayed and said that I'd really managed to capture not just the characters they had played, but the actors themselves in my work. That was incredibly meaningful to me.

And, very recently, I had a 1700 square foot gallery of my work at STLV. The brother of one of the organizers had come to visit at the convention for the first time in 30 years. The organizer had told me that her brother was quite "restrained" as a person, and that somehow seeing my work appeared to bring him out of his 'shell' immediately in a way she had never seen! That brought me joy knowing that the work had that effect for him! And I will note that he did indeed go home with one of my prints… one of Spock… of course.

Our thanks to Kavita for taking time answering our questions and providing all the imagery featured in this article.

• Retrospect Studios is online at retrospectstudios.ca

01 Klingon Bird of Prey *"Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home"*

02 Kavita Maharaj

03 Spock and Valeris mind meld *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*

04 Spock *Star Trek: The Original Series*

05-06 Captain Kirk & Nurse Chapel *Star Trek: The Original Series*

07-08 Captain Picard & Lieutenant Comander Data *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

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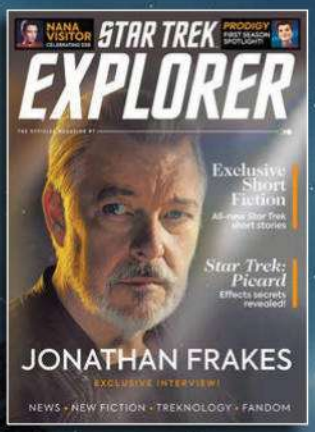

LARRY NEMECEK'S

A FISTFUL OF DATA

MAKING SENSE OF THE FUTURE

Have you had a chance to catch your breath with *Star Trek* 2024?

Think what you will about your own favorite era or series, this summer has definitely marked a milestone with the closing of the book on *Star Trek: Discovery*, the put-upon oldest child in the newest generation Gene Roddenberry's universe. Whether you were there in 2017 or arrived later to the party, it does say something for the first series of this current iteration to make its goodbyes with an ambitious if not amazing finale epic.

And – more to our point here – to deal with a landscape and characters that are still very much in play for the follow-on *Star Trek: Starfleet Academy* series, set basically in the succeeding days and months to the "Life, Indeed" *Discovery* finale. How many of the story points from the 3282 majority of that closer will factor into the new series? We'll have to see, but it bodes well for further fleshing out this timeframe of *Star Trek* storytelling – and, I hope, the tech basis of the era in a way we've still not been exposed to in-depth.

So sit back and enjoy *Star Trek: Prodigy* now running on Netflix, *Star Trek: Lower Decks* potentially wrapping up later this summer (unless it too wins a new-home reprieve for more), and of course the *Star Trek: Section 31* streaming movie and *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*' season three in 2025. There's plenty to keep yielding fun slivers of the universe as well as questions to it all...

WORDS: LARRY NEMECEK

So from the Breen to the Progenitors to the fate of retired temporal agents — and everything in-between!— the implications are coming thick and fast for series in either direction on the timeline. And as questions arise, don't forget to send your queries to startrekmagazine@titanemail.com — or via larry@larrynemecek.com, or @larrynemecek on X/Twitter.

TALKING ABOUT T'PRING

Yes, Uhura never met T'Pring in any *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* episode, but surely when Spock became human and when Vulcans communicated with the *U.S.S. Enterprise* about T'Pring's arrival, Communications Officer Uhura *must* have heard about her. Yet, in "Amok Time," she has no idea...

MARK RODRIGUEZ @QUEST2046 VIA X/ TWITTER

Well, Mark, this is true – and thanks for following up on a prior "Canon Fodder" essay here about separating Uhura from T'Pring in *Strange New World*. I take it that by "Spock is human" you are referring to the extraordinary (and comical) events of "Charades." As I've noted before to calm nerves over the tight fit of *Strange New Worlds* and The Original Series canon – still six years apart, with room

SET PIECE

What did CBS Studios do with the *Star Trek: Discovery* sets in Toronto? Are they being preserved, like, I hope, the *Star Trek: Picard* season three sets were in Hollywood? Especially the *U.S.S. Enterprise* 1701-D?

DAWN ENNIS, CONNECTICUT USA @LIFEAFTERDAWN VIA TWITTER/X

As you may have heard, Dawn, the *Discovery* bridge set was the only one not dismantled when the "future" ending, created quickly to serve as a series finale coda, was added to the final episode. The basic platforms and other bones are already given over to *Star Trek: Section 31* movie sets.

Back in Los Angeles, the only sets retained from *Picard* are those of the historic *Enterprise*-D recreation, at the behest of marketing and licensing arms. The rest of those 2501-era starship interiors like the *U.S.S. Titan*-A and the *U.S.S. Stargazer* are no more.

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to maneuver – Uhura has yet to share any physical space with T'Pring in the newer show.

"Charades" is carefully structured so that Uhuru's presence is all about the B-story, the Kherkovian aliens mystery. In contrast, after one generic "Vulcan coaching" session with Spock and her three main crew besties, Uhura never appears anywhere near T'Pring, or anyone wrapped up in her plot: her parents, Spock, Amanda, or even Pike, in his strained hosting of the V'Shal dinner.

Most of all, remember too that Uhura was serving about *Enterprise* during T'Pring's first visit while still only a cadet and thus crewing her station only part-time. Other comm officers, such as Ensign Christina, were variously on duty as well.

While it's true that the Vulcan's name may have been shuffled around comm logs *after* Uhura's promotion, including T'Pring's second *Enterprise* visit for the V'Shal... well, it might have been during an "overnight" shift, with another comm officer on duty. Depending on how soon Spock and T'Pring's "pause" becomes permanent and she never flags the ship again, it could be that Uhura still might lose even a memory of her name amid all the crush of her Spock memories made and still to come. And again – it's T'Pring's image and not name that Spock first presents to the bridge crew in "Amok Time."

All of which to mean that we *still* have no evidence that the two ever physically and consciously met. Thank goodness!

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NAME CHECK QUERY

Apologies if you've already answered this one, but what's the in-universe reason for early Starfleet name checks like UESPA, Star Service and Space Central?

ZX GEOFF OWEN
@NCC_17FORMULA1 VIA X/TWITTER

You're right, Geoff: In the beginning, The Original Series was a huge paradigm shift of storytelling and imagination. Everything had to be invented for Gene Roddenberry's universe – conceptually, as well as physically. And as we know, not all of it was finalized on the set *or* on the page by the time cameras rolled on the pilots, much less season one.

Gene had not devised a name for the space service, and the titles you list were all tried and discarded, until newly-joined head writer Gene Coon settled on "Starfleet", in time for the filming of "The Menagerie". We can just about dismiss all the others you listed, and more for canon as mumbling or misspeaking, or better yet, just paraphrasing. But UESPA, or the United Earth Space Probe Agency is mentioned specifically, several times: *in toto* in "Tomorrow is Yesterday" – when Kirk might be feeding 1960s US Air Force pilot Capt. John Christopher some older, non-current history, out of caution; but initially and cleverly heard as its pronounced acronym in a captain's log heard in "Charlie X."

Often overlooked are the latter-day *visual* UESPA retcons by art staff: A logo turns up on the *Friendship*-1 deep space probe in the last season of *Star Trek: Voyager*, meaning the agency was in existence at its launch in 2067, six years after Vulcan first contact and a century before the UFP. A century later, UESPA would be viable and included along with Earth Starfleet by the 2160s, in the official logo seen during *Star Trek: Enterprise*. Over 200 years later, the agency would still exist in some form, seen on dedication plaques of starships, including the *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC 1701-B in 2293!

Incidentally, when you check out all the The Original Series scripts, the eventual term was always and consistently devised in two words as "Star Fleet". Dorothy Fontana would use that phrasing even in the early days of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. But the only time we see the term on camera is the classified report on Talos IV binder cover in "The Menagerie, Part I"— and, with "onscreen" appearance now the gold standard for all things canon, one-word "Starfleet" it is.

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01 T'Pring and Spock in a scene from the *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* season two episode, "Charades"

02 *U.S.S. Discovery* Bridge set

03 TheTalos IV classified report *Star Trek:* The Original Series season one "The Menagerie, Part I"

04 The United Earth Space Probe Agency mission patch

CANON FODDER

PUTTING CONTINUITY IN THE FIRING LINE

Once again, as we process what just came down from *Star Trek: Discovery* and enjoy the double-whammy of fresh *Star Trek: Prodigy* and *Star Trek: Lower Decks* this summer, the atypical queries keep grabbing my attention. Here's a simple query that has nothing to do with canon continuity — and yet, it's a deep-dive curiosity just right for Canon Fodder:

I'm still confused which new *Star Trek* shows film at which studio in Toronto, and are there still two separate studio lots?
ANN MARIE SEGAL, NEW YORK CITY

That's understandable, Ann Marie. With *Star Trek: Discovery*'s passing, it feels like an eternity now, but it was only seven years ago that a new generation of *Star Trek* hacked out its first homestead in... Canada, and not the familiar Paramount Pictures lot in Hollywood.

Way back in 2016, it was the Pinewood Toronto Studios, a sister stage to the famed Pinewood lot in England, home to the James Bond films and more, that would fulfill co-creator Bryan Fuller's desire to shoot there, rather than back "home."

And funny you should ask this, Ann Marie, because the *Star Trek* stages in Toronto made the news earlier this year!

As *Discovery* wound down, Pinewood decided to honor that duration and incredible complexity by honoring its Stage 8 with the new name, "The *Star Trek* Stage." Most recently, it was home to the ship's Ready Room and the large Federation HQ circular meeting room, lobby and corridors, but *Discovery*, in its time, has also utilized the lot's Stage 7, Stage 9, Stage 12 and a huge 45,900-sq.-ft. space it aptly calls the Mega Stage. That's a lot of real estate!

You may have seen the announcement about the honorary naming amid the fanfare for *Discovery's* finale episode, although the photo released for the occasion with the crew on hand was actually taken well over a year ago — on April 25, 2023, taking advantage of cast's final gathering to film "Admiral" Burnham's memory flashback for the finale's future-set coda that was added after cancellation of season six was announced.

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Amid all the faces, note how, just as with that sequence, the final-season "new crew" are absent in favor of the long-term faces, plus David "Book" Ajala. The sole exception: Wilson "Dr. Culber" Cruz, who had a schedule conflict for the day – the first of the three-day "Coda" shoot. He was inserted into the scene with both a stand-in for wide shots, and CGI for briefly-glimpsed close-ups.

Where confusion set in for you about stages was the ballyhooed opening in September 2019 of CBS Stages Canada, the US network taking advantage of the lower-cost production boon in that country. *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* was the second series to set up shop at the lot, where six soundstages plus offices and workshops are clustered in the westside Toronto suburb of Mississauga — about an hour most times of day from Pinewood's studio, downtown.

Sounds like enough space to allow a little friendly rivalry, right?

In the years since, as successive *Star Trek* projects have remained at Pinewood, however – with the LA-based *Star Trek: Picard* still set in greater Los Angeles. Building and film starts were delayed by pandemic, but the *Star Trek: Starfleet Academy* series is being mounted there, including the "Mega Stage." The *Discovery* sets were struck: all but the Bridge was gone by the time of the "Coda" reunion shoot. Their risers and other stage infrastructure were utilized by *Star Trek: Section 31* sets built over them.

Oh, an the amazing "AR wall" for epic 3-D digital backgrounds in live shooting that you've seen so much about? It sits in a third location: specially, built at the Piximondo digital effects stage and studio, a few blocks north of Pinewood.

Star Trek: Picard was filmed up in the northside LA suburb of Santa Clarita Studios, some 30 minutes north of *Star Trek*'s traditional home at Paramount Pictures in Hollywood, from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* through to *Star Trek: Enterprise*, including the first ten movies. Kirk and Spock, however, first saw the light of day on Desilu's old Stages 9-10 (now re-numbered as Paramount 31-32) after their pilots were filmed at Desilu-Culver, now the Culver Studios, an hour south in Southern California's other historic film district, not far from Sony-MGM.

For completists, the Kelvinverse came to life traditionally, at Paramount Pictures for *Star Trek* (2009), then at Sony for *Into Darkness* – with *Star Trek: Beyond* filmed at stages in Vancouver, Canada.)

DATACORE

LARRY NEMECEK

As a longtime Star Trek author of bestseller The TNG Companion, *speaker, consultant, interviewer, archivist and editor Larry Nemecek hosts The Trek Files weekly for Roddenberry Podcasts, livestreams Trekland Tuesdays Live, and leads the Portal 47 monthly "backstage" fan experience and Trekland Treks location site day tours from larrynemecek.com. He is also half of* Cadet Alice and Dr. Trek Talk Prodigy *with his granddaughter, and his updated Star Trek: Stellar Cartography map/book set continues to guide fans and Star Trek TV creators alike.*

01 The *Star Trek* stage

02 *Star Trek: Discovery* season 5 "Life, Itself"

02

LOST & FOUND

ARCHIVE IMAGES RETRIEVED

WORDS: LARRY NEMECEK

The main focus for *Star Trek: Voyager's* 30th anniversary is next January 16, of course, on the occasion of the series' formal premiere. But to start the party early, remember the new series was already casting and soon to be filming at this point in 1994 – and so we celebrate the busiest of all *Star Trek* years this issue with a fun shot from a memorable day.

It was Thursday, September 29, and the company had already survived setting sail without a captain, then marked Day Two and Three with Genevieve Bujold playing Janeway – and then another week with an empty center seat until Kate Mulgrew found her way there on Day 10. Sadly, Mulgrew's hair did not quite arrive at the same time – and her daily-use wedge cut used initially gave way to the infamous maternal "bun" sometime after filming had started, requiring late and expensive reshoots on location at the LA Convention Center for "Ocampa City."

But on this day, the captain and her hairstyle were at last settled in – as was director Rick Kolbe, apparently, here making a point to her amusement. Kolbe, dubbed the "Colonel" by the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* cast for his heavy German accent, directed both their finale and the *Voyager* premiere in a storied career, his years across many series marked by 17 for *The Next Generation*, 19 on *Voyager*, 13 for *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* and one for *Star Trek: Enterprise*. His huge 50-episode tally of the era was second only to producer-director David Livingston's 62, and he later passed away in 2012.

But on Day 18 of the planned 27-day pilot shoot, Kolbe could afford to finally illustrate his points with a little panache. And we got a backstage photo for the ages!

Inside Trek

HOUSE-WARMING

An exclusive *Star Trek* story by Greg Cox trailing his new novel, *Lost to Eternity*

THE LIFE & LEGACY OF RO LAREN

TOP TEN *STAR TREK* MOMENTS

LOOKING BACK AT PIVOTAL POINTS ACROSS SIX DECADES!

TOP 10 *STAR TREK* MOMENTS

BY JAY STOBIE

10 STAR TREK PREMIERES

The very first (and unofficial) *Star Trek* Day took place on September 8th, 1966, when "The Man Trap" marked the show's US television debut. While the unaired pilot, "The Cage," and four additional episodes were produced before this installment, "The Man Trap" aired prior to the others and introduced us to Captain James T. Kirk, Science Officer Spock, and the *U.S.S. Enterprise* crew as they sought to solve a series of mysterious deaths involving a creature that sucked the salt out of its victims' bodies. Fifty-eight years later, and the franchise is still going strong!

09 THE SPACE SHUTTLE *ENTERPRISE*

Star Trek's place in popular culture was solidified on September 17th, 1976, when NASA unveiled its first space shuttle orbiter, *Enterprise*. Originally intended to be called *Constitution*, the shuttle inspired countless fans to petition for the craft to be renamed in honor of Captain Kirk's legendary command. The campaign proved successful, and *Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry, as well as stars Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, George Takei, Nichelle Nichols, James Doohan, and Walter Koenig, attended the real-life *Enterprise*'s official rollout ceremony.

08 *STAR TREK*'S BIG SCREEN DEBUT

Despite an inability to launch *Star Trek: Phase II*, which had been planned as the first live-action spin-off series, the success of *Star Wars* encouraged executives to revive the *Star Trek* franchise as a feature film. *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* brought back the original cast, and the fan–favorite characters boarded a refittted *U.S.S. Enterprise*, setting course to save Earth from an enigmatic entity. The 1979 movie paved the way for five sequels with Kirk's crew, and it also set the stage for more spin-offs and films which followed "the next generation" of Starfleet's finest.

07 THE DEATH OF AN ICON

Fans looked on in disbelief as Spock sacrificed himself to save the *U.S.S. Enterprise* crew in 1982's *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*. The tragic scene struck a chord amidst *Star Trek* circles and beyond, as Spock's death would continue to be referenced for decades to come, in everything from casual conversations to a mention on the hit series, *Seinfeld*. Even though we now know the Vulcan eventually returned in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*, the loss of a beloved main character still resonates on a profound level.

06 EQUALITY ON THE BRIDGE

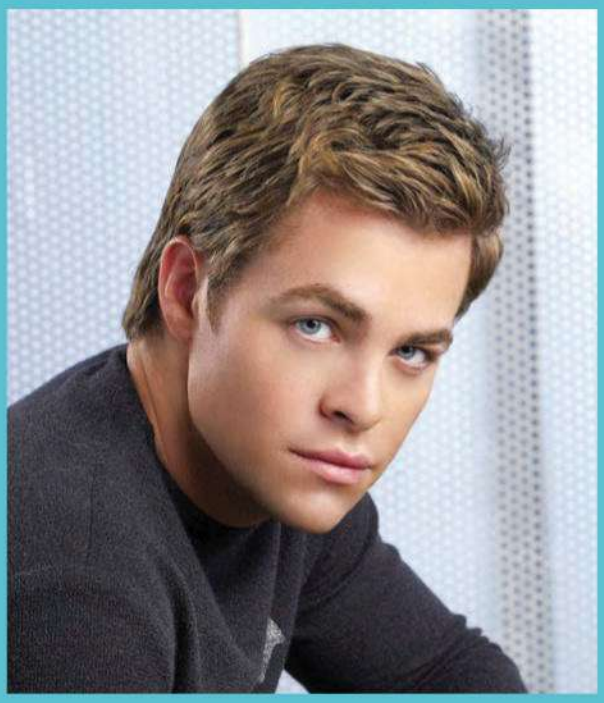
Madge Sinclair's appearance as the unnamed captain of the *U.S.S. Saratoga* in *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* finally provided audiences with an overdue depiction of a female officer commanding a Starfleet vessel. Referred to as Captain Alexander in the film's non-canon novelization, the character acted valiantly during the whale probe crisis. Seven years later, Sinclair went on to portray Silva La Forge, another Starfleet captain who happened to be the mother of Geordi La Forge, in the episode, "Interface."

05 INTRODUCING *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*

Could *Star Trek* succeed without Captain Kirk and the familiar cast of the original *U.S.S. Enterprise*? *Star Trek: The Next Generation* answered that question with a resounding, *yes!*, debuting in September 1987 and ultimately being perceived by many as the finest series of the franchise. The show's popularity resulted in feature films and multiple spin-offs. The fervor surrounding *The Next Generation* cast's reunion in the final season of *Star Trek: Picard* demonstrated the affection that fans had accrued for Jean-Luc Picard and his crew.

04 A DEEP SPACE DIVERSION

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine experimented with *Star Trek*'s proven formula by trading in the voyages of a Federation starship for life aboard a Cardassian space station. The series also broke ground by relying on a wealth of recurring characters and focusing on serialized storylines, particularly after the introduction of the Dominion in season two. *Deep Space Nine* developed its own highly devoted fanbase, which has grown exponentially as new audiences have binged the series in our modern streaming era.



03 CREATING THE KELVIN TIMELINE

After *Star Trek: Enterprise* concluded in 2005, *Star Trek* found itself without a film or ongoing television series for the first time in 18 years. A spark was needed to reenergize the franchise, and that came in the form of the J.J. Abrams-directed blockbuster, *Star Trek* (2009). Boasting a talented cast playing alternate reality counterparts of Captain Kirk's crew, as well as a powerful performance by Leonard Nimoy as Prime Spock, the movie and its sequels infused a new rush of excitement into *Star Trek* – and also laid the foundation for its return to the small screen.

02 A DISCOVERY AWAITS

In 2017, *Star Trek: Discovery* brought the saga back to its television origins, while also becoming the franchise's first installment to debut in the streaming era. The series followed Michael Burnham and her prolific journey to the *U.S.S. Discovery*-A's captain's chair. *Discovery*'s instant appeal demonstrated fandom's desire for more stories to be told in the *Star Trek* universe and ushered in another golden era of *Trek*, spawning everything from live-action hits *Picard* and *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* to the animated series *Star Trek: Lower Decks* and *Star Trek: Prodigy*.

01 BACK TO THE BEGINNING

Nearly 58 years after production began on *Star Trek*'s original pilot, "The Cage," *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* finally turned the spotlight to Captain Christopher Pike and the pre-Kirk exploits of the *U.S.S. Enterprise*. Pairing legacy characters Pike, Spock, Number One, Nyota Uhura, Nurse Chapel, Doctor M'Benga, and the Kirk brothers with newcomers La'An Noonien-Singh, Erica Ortegas, Hemmer, and Pelia, the series offered a perfect blend of nostalgia and hope in an episodic format that was acclaimed by fans and critics alike.

THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF *Ro Laren*

Born into the Cardassian occupation of Bajor, Ro Laren persevered through tremendous hardships, including witnessing her father's torture and murder at the hands of the Cardassians. Ro eventually made her way to Starfleet, where her service was marred by disciplinary issues and tensions with her colleagues. The Bajoran's disobedience during an away mission resulted in a court martial and her confinement in a Federation stockade. However, an admiral's unorthodox assignment set Ro on a collision course with Captain Jean-Luc Picard that forever altered both officers' fates...

WORDS: JAY STOBIE

From Family to the Fleet

As one would expect, the brutality Ro Laren endured under Cardassian rule had a profound impact on her early years. She was only seven when she was forced to watch her father's death, and the trauma twisted her perception of the event. Seeing her father beg for mercy generated feelings of shame about her family and culture. Ro's belief that Bajorans were lost and defeated played a major part in her decision to run away from her home.

Ro carried this burden even after she joined Starfleet, and its relentless weight led her to gain a reputation for being disagreeable and disorderly. The Bajoran served on numerous Federation vessels, but it was her time on the *U.S.S. Wellington* that made her infamous. On a mission to Garon II, eight away team members perished after Ro refused to obey an order from a superior officer. Ro opted not to defend herself during the subsequent court martial, ultimately landing in a Federation prison.

An Escape to the *U.S.S. Enterprise NCC 1701*-D

While facing a lengthy confinement, Ro was approached by Admiral Kennelly for a secret operation in 2368. The Bajoran would receive her freedom in exchange for undertaking the assignment, but Kennelly ordered her to conceal the true objective. On the surface, Ro was tasked with supporting Captain Picard's mission to negotiate with Orta, the leader of a Bajoran faction who allegedly destroyed the Federation colony on Solarion IV. In reality, Kennelly had commissioned Ro to offer Orta weapons he could use against the Cardassians in return for ceasing hostilities against the Federation – a deal that Starfleet would never approve.

Already encumbered by her inability to share this information with Picard, Ensign Ro also received an atypically chilly reception from the *U.S.S. Enterprise*-D's crew. The Bajoran responded in kind, as her abrasive personality caused hostility with Commander Riker and other officers familiar with her service record. Nevertheless, she succeeded in helping Picard locate Orta, though she was shocked when the Bajoran dissident claimed his cell was not responsible for the attack against the Federation.

Ro retreated within herself once again, but a consultation with Guinan convinced her to confess to the captain about Admiral Kennelly's illegal plan. The ensign collaborated with Picard on a ruse to expose the admiral, who had privately agreed to draw Orta out so the Cardassians could kill him.

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Ro's cooperation turned out to be vital in uncovering another truth – the Cardassians had orchestrated the entire affair, including the strike on the Federation colony, as a way to eliminate Orta and his cell. Recognizing Ro's potential, Picard offered her a position aboard the *Enterprise*-D.

Second Chances

Ensign Ro's time on the Federation flagship began with a perilous crisis, as a collision with a quantum filament left the vessel damaged and adrift. With the crew dispersed throughout the ship and Counselor Deanna Troi in temporary command, Ro clashed with Troi over how they should safeguard the *Enterprise*-D. The counselor stood firm, successfully navigating the ordeal, and earning the ensign's respect. Ro's abhorrence for authority also fostered an abrasive relationship with Commander William Riker – at least until the Satarrans wiped the crew's memories in an effort to provoke a strike on the Lysians. Relieved of their preconceptions, Ro and Riker developed a solid working relationship and even engaged in a brief romance.

While the Bajoran officer's primary duties centered on piloting the ship, her aptitude extended to other fields, as well. Ro oversaw the tactical station when Lieutenant Worf was held hostage by the prisoners from Mab-Bu VI. In addition to dispatching security teams and tracking the intruders with the *Enterprise*-D's internal scanners, Ro assisted Lieutenant Commander Geordi La Forge with his effort to incapacitate the convicts with a plasma shock. Soon after the incident, Ro found herself at the helm when a distortion of the space-time continuum forced the crew to repeatedly relive their own demises in the Typhon Sector – at least until Lieutenant Commander Data broke the cycle.

Although her initial interactions were contentious, Ro managed to manifest profound friendships on the flagship. Toward the end of 2368, an encounter with a damaged Romulan vessel and its experimental phased cloaking device precipitated a transporter accident that left Ro and La Forge invisible to the rest of their crew. They persevered, overcoming their doubts to foil Romulan sabotage and restore their original forms. The harrowing trial and its accompanying isolation brought them closer together, with Ro admitting the experience made her reevaluate her thoughts on the afterlife. The next year, another transporter malfunction transformed Ro, Guinan, and two other crew members into children, providing the El-Aurian bartender with a chance to help Ro come to terms with the childhood that the refugee camps had prevented her from enjoying.

01 *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season seven, "Pre-emptive Strike"

02 *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season five, "Ensign Ro"

03 *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season five, "The Next Phase"

04 *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season six, "Rascals"

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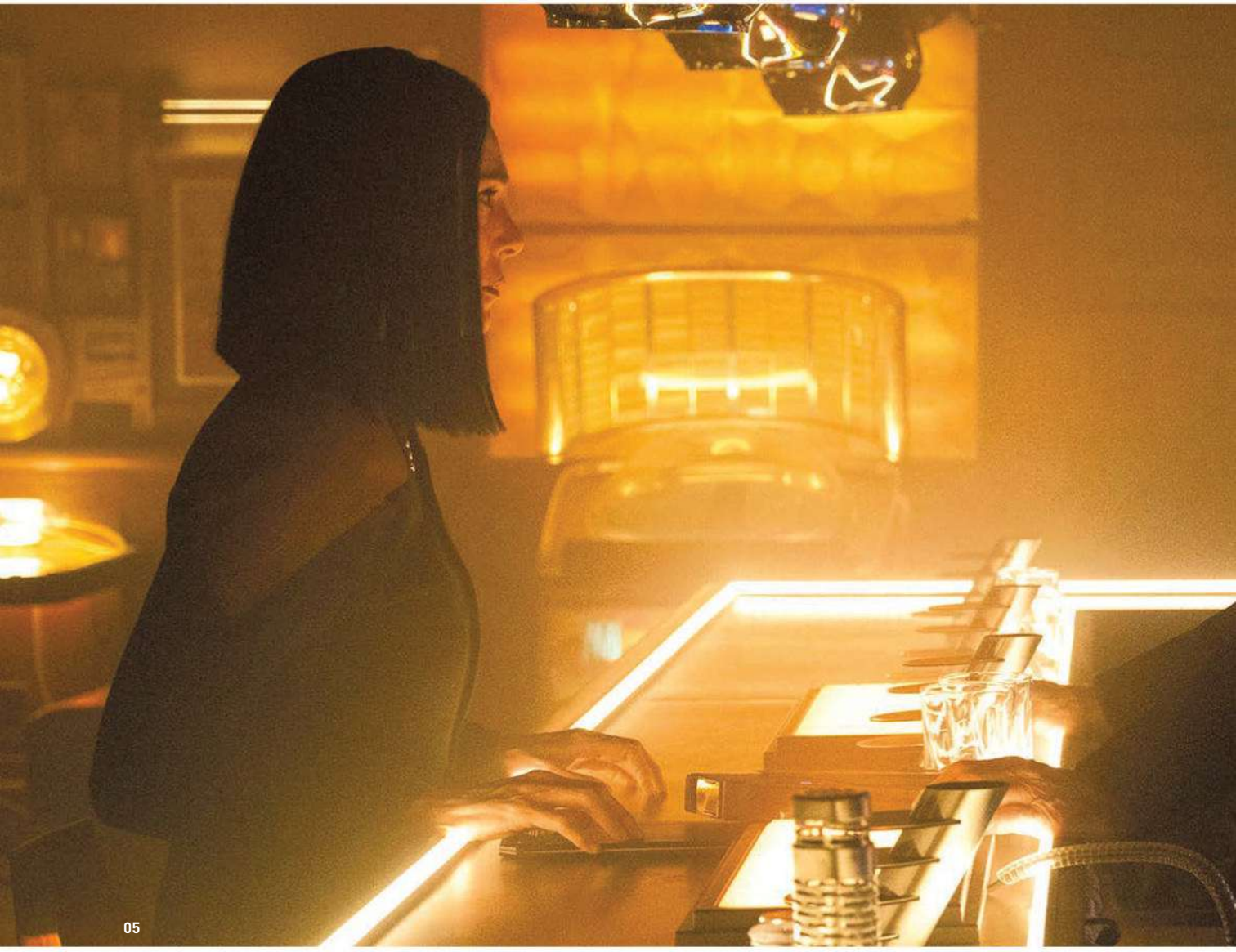
The Maquis Mission

Ensign Ro departed the *Enterprise*-D to participate in Starfleet's Advanced Tactical Training program, an arduous class for which Captain Picard had nominated Ro to attend. Upon completing the course in late 2370, Ro received a promotion to lieutenant and resumed her duties aboard the flagship. Shortly thereafter, the Cardassians pressured the Federation to take action against the Maquis, a group of Federation colonists dissatisfied with the treaty ratified by the two governments. Starfleet enlisted Ro to infiltrate the Maquis as a way to ensure hostilities in the Demilitarized Zone did not escalate into an all-out war.

Emboldened by Picard's faith in her, Lieutenant Ro accepted the assignment and relied upon her troubled past to embed herself with a Maquis cell commanded by a man named Macias. Given their similar histories with Cardassian oppression and a shared fondness for *hasperat*, Ro and Macias swiftly established a friendly rapport. The lieutenant obtained much-needed medical supplies for the Maquis, furthering her status so she could lure the Maquis into a Federation trap. However, after Macias was killed by Cardassian agents, Ro began to feel doubt about her role, an uncertainty which prompted Picard to order Riker to accompany her on the mission.

As Picard and the *Enterprise*-D prepared to ensnare the militant colonists, Ro made the heart wrenching decision to betray the captain's confidence. The



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Bajoran exposed the hidden Starfleet task force, choosing to flee with her new friends and officially join the Maquis. Riker begrudgingly wished her well on her journey, and Ro requested he convey how very sorry she was to the captain. The apology did little to assuage the emotional wound the lieutenant had left on Picard. Allying with the Maquis bestowed Ro with a sense of belonging, but it obliterated her bond with the captain.

Full Circle

The rift between Ro and Picard festered for over three decades, until the two crossed paths aboard the *U.S.S. Titan*-A in 2401. Sent to investigate Picard and Riker's involvement in stealing a shuttle to rescue Doctor Beverly Crusher, Ro stunned her former captain by being back in uniform and holding the rank of commander. Years after her defection, the Bajoran had surrendered herself to Starfleet and underwent another court martial. Ro's unique background drew the attention of Starfleet Intelligence, who bestowed upon her a chance for a fresh start. The hostile reunion crescendoed, with each officer confessing that the other had broken their heart.

The cathartic exchange opened the door for dialogue, and Ro revealed that Changelings had compromised every level of Starfleet. Rather than arresting Picard, Ro wished to alert him to the danger, gave him her Bajoran earring, and bought him time to escape. A Changeling bomb on her shuttle forced Commander Ro's hand, and the Bajoran selflessly elected to ram the *U.S.S. Intrepid*'s nacelle in order to delay its pursuit of the *Titan*-A. In spite of the circumstances, Ro and Picard used these precious moments to release their bitterness and acknowledge their emotional connection.

While tragedy permeated Ro Laren's tumultuous existence, her life was best defined by steadfast determination and a relentless fight to find the right cause. Her contributions to the *Enterprise*-D were remarkable, but it was Ro's last mission that left the

05 *Star Trek: Picard*, season three, "Imposters"

06 *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season seven, "Pre-emptive Strike"

07 *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season five, "The Next Phase"

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most indelible impression. Aside from informing Picard about the greater threat, the earring Ro transferred to Picard contained vital intelligence on the Changeling conspiracy. After her death, the device allowed the *Titan* to link up with Worf and Raffi Musiker, Ro's secret operatives whose own investigation was pivotal to halting the rogue shapeshifters. Because of Ro Laren, Picard and his cohorts pieced together a delicate puzzle and exposed the alliance between the Changelings and the Borg Queen. In essence, Ro's sacrifice protected the entire galaxy from a resurgent Borg Collective, though it was particularly fitting that her final deeds safeguarded both of her homes - the Federation *and* Bajor.

EXCLUSIVE FICTION

Housewarming

WORDS: GREG COX
ART: PETE WALLBANK

EARTH SPACEDOCK, 2290

Captain Hikaru Sulu settled into his new quarters aboard the *U.S.S. Excelsior* on the eve of the ship's first three-year mission. The generous accommodations were definitely a step up from his old digs aboard the *U.S.S. Enterprise* and *Enterprise-A.* "Housewarming" gifts from friends, family, and well-wishers had already been delivered to the premises, among them a set of traditional Japanese *warosoku* candles from his daughter Demora, whose photo was proudly displayed at his personal work station; an antique sextant from Captain Kirk; a swagger stick from the *Excelsior*'s previous captain, Lawrence Styles; and, most intriguingly, an exotic potted planet whose species Sulu could not immediately identify despite his keen interest in botany. Leafy cerise fronds, close to a meter in height, prompted nostalgic memories of "Gertrude," his pet carnivorous plant way back when, while a large turquoise bud, not yet in bloom, crowned the mystery houseplant. No tag identified the sender. Uhura? Chekov? Rand? An attached card bore only a succinct instruction: "WATER ME."

All right then.

Expecting company, Sulu watered the plant, tentatively nicknaming it "Matilda," by calling up a pitcher of distilled water from a food slot next to his desk, before lighting one of the meticulously hand-crafted candles to create a warmer, more hospitable atmosphere. He then prepared two cups of tea, which, along with the candle, he laid out on a small dining table. He was debating whether he had time to try looking up Matilda's species at his personal computer terminal when a chime informed him that his guest had arrived – precisely on schedule.

"Thank you for making time to speak with me, sir," Lieutenant Commander Saavik said upon being granted entrance. Her rigorous punctuality came as no surprise.

"No problem. Please make yourself at home."

Sulu wondered why the young Vulcan officer had requested this meeting. To be honest, they didn't really know each other all that well, despite having briefly served together on the *Enterprise* during the Khan and Genesis Planet affairs. She had mostly been away from the bridge, stranded with endangered landing parties, in both of those crises.

"Allow me to congratulate you on your promotion to Captain," she said with typically Vulcan formality, her hands clasped behind her back.

"Likewise on your new posting as helmsman of the *Enterprise.* Speaking from experience, I can't think of a better place to prepare for a command of your own one day."

"Which brings us to the matter I wish to discuss with you. It has not escaped my notice that Captain Kirk prefers to keep his bridge crew unchanged as much as possible. Given that he has been accustomed to having you at the helm for so many years, I have some concerns about 'filling your shoes' as it were. Can you perhaps offer some advice based on your decades of experience in the position?"

Ouch, Sulu thought privately. *Time flies at warp speed sometimes.*

"Happy to oblige." He sat down at the table and directed her to sit down across from him. The plant-based *warasoku* candle between them produced a soft, calming glow, along with a soothing aroma, but little or no smoke. He adopted an avuncular tone, hoping to ease whatever nerves might be hiding behind her Vulcan reserve. "I appreciate your concerns, but I wouldn't worry about it. Kirk is tough but fair, and he already knows you can handle yourself in a tight spot… aside from that time you got me killed trying to rescue the *Kobayashi Maru,"* he teased her.

A hint of a wince ruffled her stoic expression. "Not a memory I cherish."

"Just kidding," he assured her. "Seriously, if you want my best advice, here it is: I know that Spock is your mentor and that you have all that formidable Vulcan logic and intellect on your side, and, don't get me wrong, those are very valuable assets to be sure, but sometimes, when in doubt or desperate circumstances, ask yourself: What would Captain Kirk do?"

She arched an eyebrow. "That is all?"

"That's a lot. You've seen him in action, Saavik, up close and personal. You've had the opportunity to observe firsthand the way he beats the odds by refusing to give up even when hope seems lost, often by thinking outside the box and taking big risks when necessary."

"Such as taking refuge in the Mutara Nebula," she said, nodding, "or destroying the *Enterprise* to turn defeat into victory."

"Bingo. Trust me, you could do a lot worse than . . . than . . . ."

Than what?

His train of thought slipped its mag-rails. A yawn escaped him as he fuzzily became aware of a heavy floral fragrance permeating the chamber; initially masked by the scent of the candle, the cloying fragrance now seemed overwhelming. *Matilda?* He tried to turn his head to check on the plant, but couldn't muster the energy to do so. His eyelids began to succumb to gravity as he started to doze off. His limbs suddenly felt as heavy as neutronium, as though he hadn't slept in ages. He struggled to stay awake, but found he couldn't keep his eyes open a moment longer. His head sagged limply toward his chest. A teacup slipped from his fingers, crashing onto the deck . . . .

* * *

"Captain Sulu? Captain!"

Saavik experienced a moment of controlled alarm as Sulu abruptly lost consciousness, slumping forward at his seat. She attempted to go to his assistance, only to find herself also succumbing to a sudden, enervating fatigue that appeared to be sapping her energy at an accelerated rate. Rubbery legs lost their structural integrity, keeping her seated. A heady odor crept up on her senses before flooding them. Fighting to keep both her inner and outer eyelids open, she noted belatedly the unusual botanical specimen blossoming in an alcove a few meters away, infusing the atmosphere with an apparently soporific fragrance. Vibrant blue petals, streaked with lurid yellow veins, radiated from the hub of the sizable flower now blooming atop a leafy red stalk. That the plant was responsible for her and Sulu's debilitated condition was quickly confirmed when glistening pink tendrils shot forth from the center of the flower, snaking across the chamber to twine themselves around both she and Sulu, starting at their ankles and working their way up. The clinging vines pricked through her garments,

painlessly piercing her skin, to further leech her vitality. An unhealthy pallor came over Sulu's complexion; his breathing grew ragged. She felt her own life force diminishing.

We are in mortal danger, she concluded, *from a parasitic lifeform of unknown origin.*

Her relative youth, along with her superior Vulcan strength and stamina, had seemingly bought her a few more moments of consciousness than Sulu, but their situation was clearly dire. Clinging to awareness, too weak to stand, and increasingly restrained by the prehensile vines, she groggily assessed their predicament. Neither she nor Sulu was armed, and the nearest intercom wall unit was across the room so she could not readily summon assistance. With her vigor ebbing by the moment, she knew she had to act quickly if they were to survive.

Drastic measures are required. Think outside the box.

As a cadet at Starfleet Academy, Saavik had been the star pitcher of her class's baseball team, earning her the somewhat embarrassing sobriquet, "The Photon Torpedo." She hoped those skills remained intact as, marshaling the very last of her reserves, she put all her remaining energy into tugging one arm free from the vines binding it. The sticky, sappy tendrils resisted her, but she refused to be defeated by them, fatigue or no fatigue.

"ALLOW ME TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR PROMOTION TO CAPTAIN…"

Do not give up even when the odds are against you.

Constricting red creepers tightened around her, holding her arms fast against her sides; their parasitic effect increasingly depleted her ability to liberate herself. Grunting with effort, she nonetheless managed to work her rusty pitching arm free long enough to grab onto the flickering candle and fling it at the vampiric flora. Her aim proved true as the candle struck the flower dead center, setting it ablaze.

The plant burst into flame. First its delicate blue petals, then the leaves and stalk below ignited, transforming the potted specimen into a crackling, orange-and-yellow torch. A disturbingly shrill keening briefly emanated from the burning flower; frantic vines released their prey and began whipping about wildly as the fire consumed them. Smoke rapidly filled the compartment. Fire alarms, pitched for the limited auditory faculties of base-line humanoids, assaulted Saavik's more sensitive ears as she collapsed across the table, her strength exhausted, her consciousness slipping away, so that she was only dimly aware of a Starfleet security team rushing into the captain's quarters just before she passed out entirely…

* * *

She woke in the *Excelsior's* sickbay, one biobed over from Sulu.

"Captain Sulu? Are you well?"

"Seems like it, thanks to you." He grinned and gave her a thumbs-up. She was pleased to see his color very much restored. "And how are you feeling, Lieutenant Commander?"

"Functional, it appears." She attempted to sit up, but the effort produced a degree of dizziness that discouraged completion of the action. "Within a certain margin of error."

"Take it easy, both of you." Doctor Christine Chapel presided over the sickbay, checking on her patients. The older woman perused the diagnostic displays affixed above the biobeds; Saavik understood that she had once served as a nurse aboard the *Enterprise.* "As nearly as I can tell, neither of you are going to suffer any long-term effects from your close call with that homicidal houseplant, nor from a touch of smoke inhalation, but I want to keep you both under observation a bit longer, to be safe."

"Just as long as I'm on the bridge when we launch tomorrow," Sulu said.

"Not to worry." Chapel smiled. "We'll have you back in the captain chair in no time. Cross my heart."

Saavik was gratified to see that the emergency had been resolved satisfactorily, but lingering questions remained. "I do not understand. Why was there a potentially lethal parasitic lifeform in the captain's quarters?"

"A previously unknown, possibly genetically-engineered lifeform," Chapel clarified. "Mind you, I'm a doctor, not a security chief, but the scuttlebutt is that the plant was, well, planted by hostile parties to disrupt the launch of Starfleet's first new *Excelsior*-class starship by assassinating its captain right under our noses."

"Which hostile parties?" Saavik asked.

"Take your pick. The investigation is only just underway, but I imagine they'll be looking at the usual suspects: the Klingons, the Romulans, the Orions, et cetera." Chapel glanced at Sulu. "Or maybe some old enemy with a personal grudge against you, Hikaru?"

"An arch-enemy? Me?" He dismissed the possibility. "I have no enemies. Ask anyone. I am universally beloved."

"Silly me, how could I forget that?" the doctor said with a smirk . "In any event, I'm just glad that nefarious scheme went up in flames… literally. Now lie back and get some rest while I update Starfleet on your statuses."

"WHEN IN DOUBT OR DESPERATE CIRCUMSTANCES, ASK YOURSELF: WHAT WOULD CAPTAIN KIRK DO?"

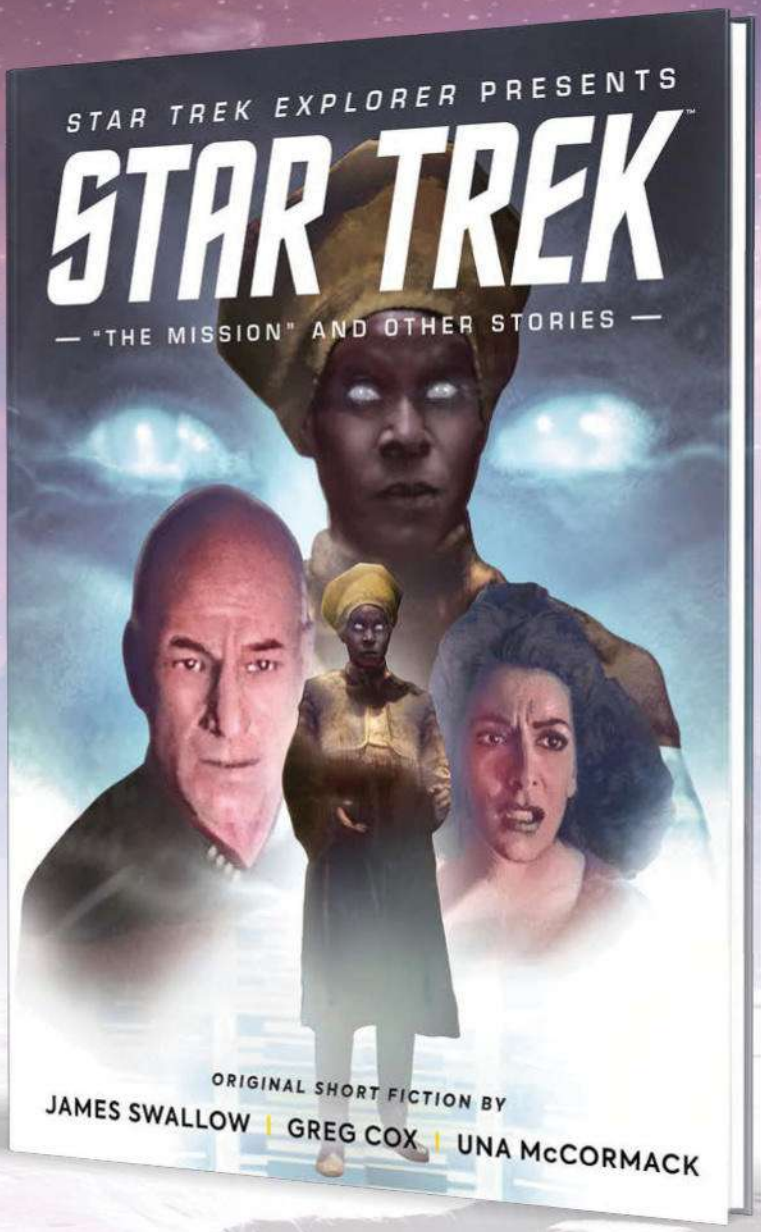
Chapel vanished into her office, leaving her patients under the watchful eye of their respective biobeds and the overhead diagnostic monitors.

"I have to hand it to you, Commander," Sulu addressed Saavik. "That was a bold move: setting fire to my quarters to save our lives."

"I simply followed your advice, sir. I asked myself: what would Captain Kirk do?"

Sulu chuckled. "You know, Saavik, I think you're going to fit in on the *Enterprise* just fine."

THRILLING ORIGINAL SHORT-FICTION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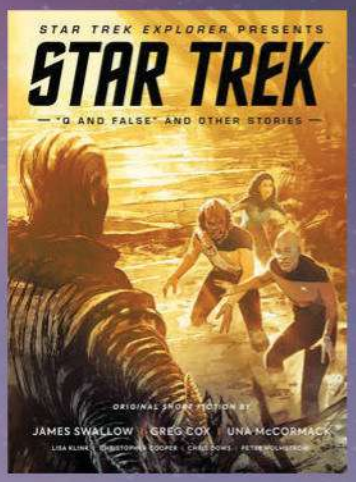

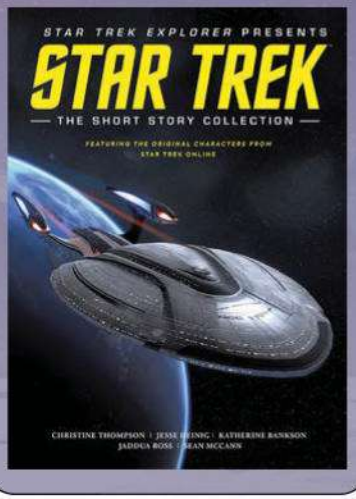

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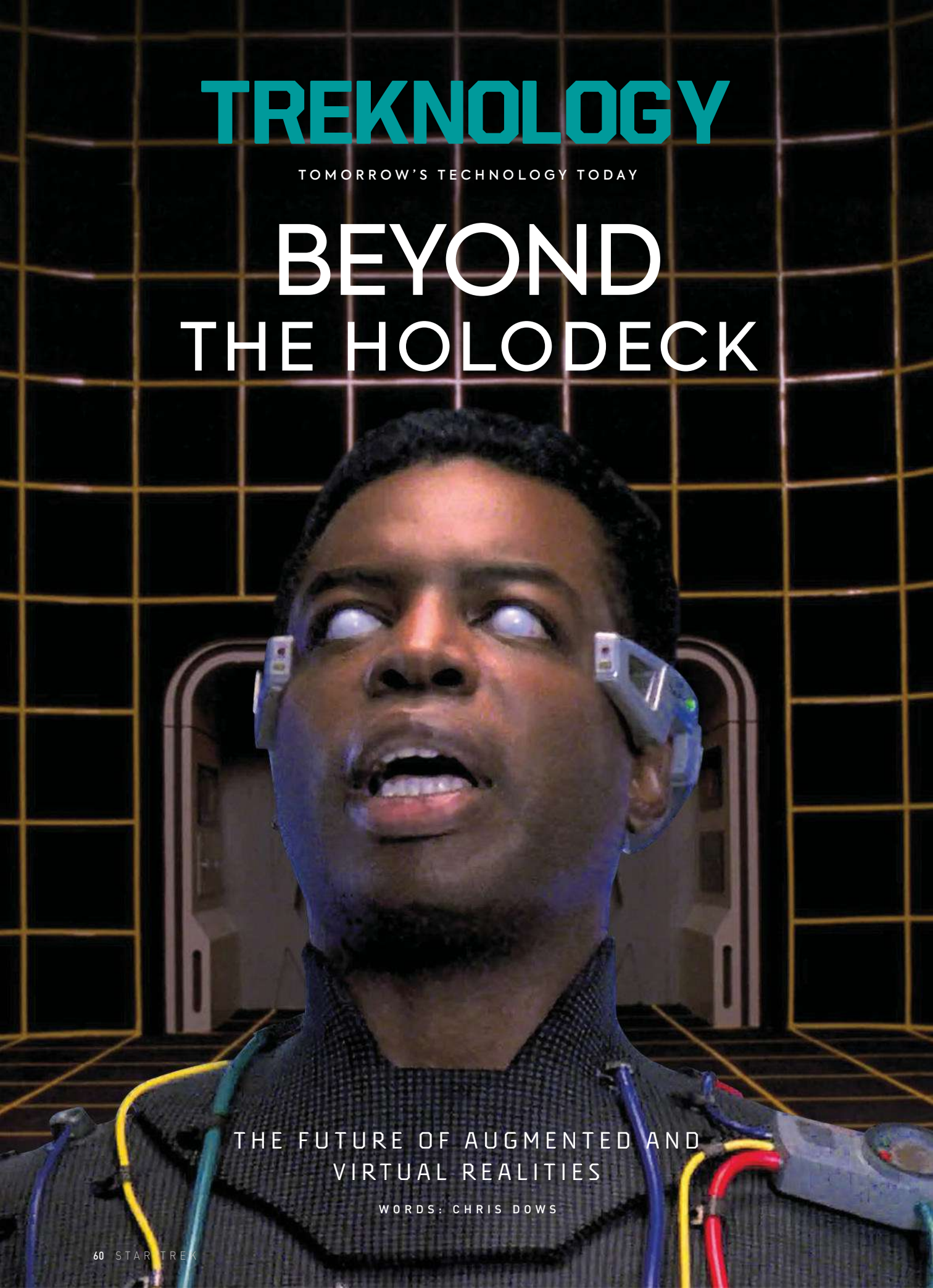
TREKNOLOGY

TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY TODAY

BEYOND THE HOLODECK



THE FUTURE OF AUGMENTED AND VIRTUAL REALITIES

WORDS: CHRIS DOWS

ARTIFICIAL WORLDS, REALISTIC DANGERS

When it comes to living in a virtual world, the Holodeck is arguably the most recognized example of how best Virtual Reality could be done – but, due to the advances needed for the manipulation and projection of energy fields to simulate environments, objects and characters, currently one of the most unachievable. That said, Holodecks remain the ultimate realization of what VR aims to be – a three-dimensional, fully immersive computer-generated world that can be explored and, crucially, interacted with. Recent advances in Artificial Intelligence by companies such as the American OpenAI's Sora system are admittedly pushing the boundaries of photo-realistic worldbuilding, but the output still relies on screens and cumbersome headsets to connect the user with uniquely created scenarios. Holodecks don't require additional devices to provide their limited (albeit enjoyable) gaming experience, but while Sora might not match Treknology in its realization, what *is* noteworthy are the various protections being put in place to prevent misuse. When you consider B'Elanna Torres's experiences in the *Star Trek: Voyager* episode "Extreme Risk", where she subjected herself to increasingly dangerous situations by turning the Holodeck Safety Protocols off, or Jean-Luc Picard's furious machine-gun attack against Borg drones in *Star Trek: First Contact,* it's clear ethical consideration should accompany any leap in immersive developments.

Holodecks aren't the only representation of Virtual Reality in *Star Trek* though; the remote probe-operating suit worn by Chief Engineer Geordi la Forge in the *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episode "Interface" presents a far more technologically achievable approach. Connected to his cerebral cortex via his VISOR (so headsets *are* part of the future after all – as you'll read later), thanks to its sensor array, Geordi could 'feel' his way as he navigated the interior of the stricken *U.S.S. Raman* within the lethal atmosphere of Marine VII in search of its sadly deceased crew.

Here on Earth, there is near-identical research into robotic systems feeding back sensory information; Polish mechanical engineer Maciej Rećko from the Bialystock University of Technology is exploring integrated haptic devices for a remote exoskeleton system for potential use in urban search and rescue scenarios, while 'smart gloves' currently being trialed for stroke survivors at Canada's University of British Columbia are designed to improve their recovery. Whatever the wearable device, bear in mind the real burns Geordi suffered on his hands due to a feedback loop in his interface suit's systems – another reminder to keep those safeties 'on'.

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LOOKS AREN'T EVERYTHING – GETTING IT REAL BEYOND SIGHT AND SOUND

Notwithstanding the current engineering limitations on creating a working Holodeck, there are several areas of global research and development aligning strongly with Holosuite Treknology. One particularly impressive example is the recent unveiling of an AI-generated Vincent Van Gogh at the Parisian Musée D'Orsay, whose computer-simulated image responds to questions from visitors and discusses 'his' (sadly brief) life and work. Created by the French AI startup Jumbo Mana, they used over 800 of the Dutch painter's own letters and collaborated with art historians to maximize authenticity of response – the kind of research that went into any number of holographic characters based on real people in the *Star Trek* universe, such as Captain Janeway's favorite holo-companion Leonardo Da Vinci, and Data's poker-playing trio of Albert Einstein, Sir Isaac Newton and Stephen Hawking. Having convincing-looking – and sounding – facsimiles of people is all well and good, but the importance of other sensations in Virtual and Augmented Reality outside of sight and sound are crucial aspects of a realistic experience. Consider the representation of temperature – other than Holosuites turning the heating up or down, a more localized approach could be based on the work recently revealed by Japanese researchers at the University of Tsukuba, whose investigations into perceptions of temperature change in VR environments have led to a non-contact technology combining a light source with a cold air flow emitter that creates a feeling of rapid cooling without an actual change in temperature. Smell is an equally important sensation in the creation of an authentic environment, so the wireless olfactory feedback system revealed last year by a research group at the City University of Hong Kong capable of releasing various odors from an array of smell generators would be just the thing. Designed for use in 4D movie watching and medical treatment, the prototype system consists of either an upper lip-mounted patch or a facemask capable of a much wider range of odor combinations. Meanwhile, from an international group headed up by Japan's Tohuku University, there's a response to the complex feedback issues of realistically opening a door in a virtual environment without walking into the wall of the physical space. They've created RedirectDoors+ which employs a combination of movable 'door robots' synchronized with the virtually created interior space to produce an authentic feedback experience of turning a doorknob. Of course, all that effort could easily be avoided if they were starship style sliding doors...

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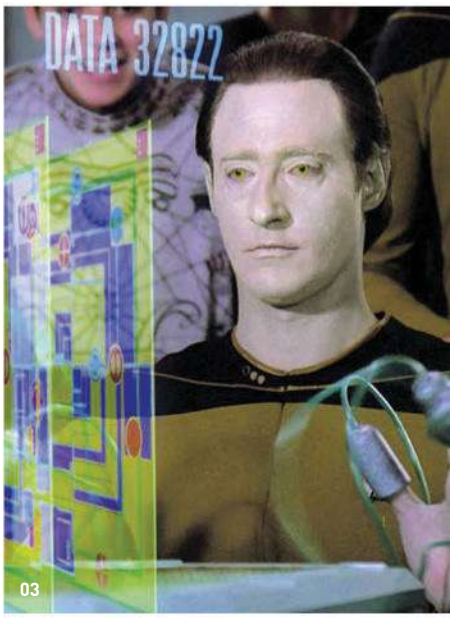
FROM GAMES TO GRAFTS – AUGMENTING ENJOYMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY



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Unlike Virtual Reality, which generates a completely fabricated environment, AR 'augments' existing surroundings by adding digitally generated artefacts to a real-world situation – think *Pokemon Go* and you'll get the idea. Just because it combines the 'real' with the 'virtual', this doesn't make AR the 'poor relation' of VR; in fact, its influence in our world extends far beyond its humble gaming roots, although *Star Trek* predicted entertainment-based AR years before the technology got into our hands. In *Star Trek: The Next Generation's* "Peak Performance", the blisteringly fast-paced game of Strategema included ten finger and thumb controllers connected to a holographically projected three-plane screen on which players had to secure colored sections. Pretty much the whole plot of *The Next Generation*'s "The Game" involves a sinister Starfleet infiltration scheme by Ktanian Etana Jol to brainwash the Enterprise D crew via a lightweight, head-mounted device that fed addictive pleasure signals – and hidden instructions – into the brain.

The gaming avatars were projected directly onto the retina – an actual technology first devised in 1998 by Dr. Thomas A. Furness III at the Human Interface Technology Laboratory at the University of Washington in conjunction with Microvision. Virtual Retinal Display technology is still being developed by companies such as Avegant in the US but for now, AR relies mostly on traditional screens.

In fact, if you've watched any *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* or *Star Trek: Discovery*, you've been enjoying the very latest advances in Augmented Reality. However, instead of a cellphone showing a single animated character, imagine a 21x9 yd horseshoe-shaped filming set – christened the 'Holodeck' by the cast and crew - surrounded by an array of LED screens over four yards high. Created by visual effects company Pixomondo, this AR wall projects anything from ship interiors to planet exterior in real time, automatically changing the aspect of the Unreal Engine software-generated background to the camera's movements and allowing the actors to see what they're reacting to. With the ability to add physical props, the results are – as we've all seen – quite staggering, thanks to the creativity of the SFX designers and technicians. It's this very same technology that is also being used by corporations such as Meta to develop a range of AR training systems for surgery, industry and engineering, combining haptic feedback devices with accurate representations of tools to provide real-time authentic experiences with no risk to patients or damage to often expensive equipment.

01 *Star Trek: First Contact*

02 *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season six, "Descent"

03 *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season two, "Peak Performance"

04 *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season five, "The Game"

05 *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, season six, "A Time to Stand"

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SENSORY OVERLOAD AND THE DILEMMA OF DISORIENTATION

As we've acknowledged, the development of VR and AR technology shouldn't be undertaken without considerable thought for the user – and with good reason, because the body of evidence involving various medical issues associated with Virtual Reality use is mounting. It might surprise you to learn the first reported case of VR sickness, symptoms for which range from dizziness to sweating, headaches and nausea, was by users of a US Army helicopter-training simulator in 1957. As the popularity of VR and AR has dramatically increased since then, so too have reports of the condition, thought to be caused by a mismatch between what you see in a headset or on a screen and physically experience – including *Star Trek* cast members such as Cellia Rose Gooding, who plays Cadet Uhura in *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, when she first worked with the AR wall technology. Little wonder that researchers worldwide are exploring the physiological reasons for the condition, including a team out of Canada's University of Waterloo who investigated why some people are more susceptible to VR motion sickness than others. They concluded the subjective vertical visual, or how individuals adjust their perception of vertical lines between reality and VR games, can be a significant contributor and are hopeful their analysis of 'sensory reweighting' might help VR designers reduce the potential for problems in future developments. That said, several other potential factors have been suggested, such as the resolution and refresh rate of the screens being used in devices.

Cybersickness has also been represented in *Star Trek*. When Captain Benjamin Sisko took command of a stolen Jem'Hadar attack ship in the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* episode "A Time to Stand", he had to use the Vorta-designed Virtual Sensory Display – another example of wearable Treknology – whose single-lens system (remarkably similar to Google Glass's now discontinued projection spectacles) took the place of a Bridge viewscreen. Unfortunately, while Sisko was able to command the vessel, after extended periods of use it gave him severe headaches. Had Doctor Bashir recommended treatment based on the 2023 findings from researchers at the University of Edinburgh, Sisko might have found himself reaching for recordings of his Holosuite favorite Vic Fontaine to alleviate his symptoms. The Scottish team's studies found that listening to joyous or calming music after using a VR device substantially decreased all forms of cybersickness, particularly feelings of nausea – although Worf would likely recommend Klingon opera.

STRANGE NEW SIGHTS

Jeff Spry connected with cinematographer Benji Bakshi just as the Hollywood SAG-AFTRA strike was ending earlier this year to hear what the talented filmmaker did to stay in the groove over the work stoppage period before *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* season three, and discover his thoughts on his foursome of season two episodes and their tones, tropes and tribulations...

WORDS: JEFF SPRY

Serving as one of the main orchestrators offering up a symphony of impactful science fiction imagery, cinematographer Benji Bakshi (*Dragged Across Concrete*, *Bone Tomahawk*) and veteran colleague Glen Keenan, CSC were the prime reason for the distinctive style of the second season of *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*.

Bakshi is a rising cinematic star, who taps into his training as a classical cellist to compose indelible shots and scenes in the final frontier that resonate with viewers of the fan-pleasing Paramount+ show. He was responsible for director of photography duties on four of the past season's standout episodes that included "Ad Astra per Aspera," "Among the Lotus-Eaters," "Lost in Translation," and *Star Trek's* historic all-musical romp, "Subspace Rhapsody."

"I keep myself in a flow state," Bakshi said of strike-enforced downtime earlier this year. "People may have different definitions of that but mine is following 'peak inspiration.' I have to still eat lunch and take care of my four-

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year-old and do the dishes, but it's staying in the head space where you're allowing inspiration to guide you. I do play my cello, but I won't necessarily do it at the same time every day. It'll be, 'I think it's cello time.' Then it might be, 'Okay, it's stare out at the mountains time. Or watch something time.'

"When we're prepping and shooting, we always have our own time to be able to put our own voice into what we're doing," Bakshi reveals. "It's the same process of thinking about what makes me excited about telling this story. What research should I do that relates to that or what experience should I go have? There's something called caustic lighting, which is basically lighting influenced by ripples of water. My son loves the aquarium, so let's go to the aquarium. There's caustic lighting everywhere. This is what it looks like when there's tons of fish in there, and this is what it looks like when there's just plant life. So I'm trying to always be in a state where you're excited about something and trying to be creative but not trying to win a contest."

"I'M TRYING TO ALWAYS BE IN A STATE WHERE YOU'RE EXCITED ABOUT SOMETHING AND TRYING TO BE CREATIVE BUT NOT TRYING TO WIN A CONTEST."

Reflecting on *Strange New Worlds'* shooting schedule at CBS Stages Canada in 2022, the skilled cinematographer discovered that the airing of the second season made for an interesting objective experience that provided fresh context by being his own audience.

"I was able to really enjoy watching them, which was not always the case in previous works, partly of because who I was and what I was judging. And also, because this content is so accessible that it's easy to be able to take it as it is, and they were really fun."

For the courtroom drama "Ad Astra per Aspera," directed by Valerie Weiss, Bakshi's primary concern was wondering if it was going to work for the audience or be too dramatically focused, due to *Star Trek* being centered around space travel, action set pieces, and problem solving.

"It's a terrestrial episode that takes place mainly on Earth," Bakshi explains. "There was some humor in it but it was a lot of drama. Because I knew the material so well, there were no surprises for me. But the audience was really engaged. It got great critical reviews. Valerie and I went into it pulling from our past filmmaking instincts. It was both of our inaugural *Star Trek* episodes ever and we dug in the way we would normally. We didn't second guess anything and it really worked. Shooting it was such a great experience."

Moving down the schedule, "Among the Lotus Eaters", directed by *The Blair Witch Project's* Eduardo Sánchez, presented a whole new set of challenges for Bakshi and the creative team while employing augmented reality tools to enhance the script's exotic environments.

"That's the fourth episode where they go to Rigel 7 and we shot a lot on The AR Wall (Volume)," adds Bakshi. "I really enjoyed using that technology. It felt like the closest thing I'd ever experienced of going from pure imagination directly to capturing footage. We worked for months in advance on the worlds, but when we got to prepping and shooting the episode we were able to implement with freedom, like moving this mountain over here or deleting it. And it allowed us to even rotate the virtual world. It felt like such a freeing process. It's in-camera, so I'm using my primary skillset, which is live-action photography.

01 *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, season two, "Among the Lotus Eaters"

02 Benji Bakshi

03 *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, season two, "Ad Astra per Aspera"

04 *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, season two, "Lost in Translation"

"We were pulling from the colors of the world. There's a nighttime Rigel 7, and a daytime Rigel 7.

"The nighttime had this blood-red horizon and the clouds were purple because the red was spilling into blue, then it was mixed with flame. All that had been established by the art department and visual effects team. I don't think we'd ever seen a nighttime Rigel 7 but the daytime was pulled from the canon reference, which was the magenta clouds, blue sky and warm sun. In the castle, one side was the blood-red horizon, and the other side was this purple-blue, so we sort of bashed them together."

Next up was the mysterious horror-laced episode directed by Dan Liu titled "Lost in Translation," which catapulted Bakshi into a haunting storyline of unsettling dread that demanded a different type of mood lighting and suspenseful shot composition.

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"Horror is similar to comedy in that those moments must sell," says Bakshi. "If they don't sell, nobody's going to like it. The horror in a horror movie is that you believe the contextual story of the character, otherwise there's no horror. We needed to sell the story first of all. Second of all, those horror moments have to work. Dan Liu honed his sense of pacing as an editor on *The Walking Dead* and later transitioned into directing episodes. With that background, he knows how to give himself options and knows which moments are going to work or not. When Hemmer appears as a zombie in the turbolift and he's shambling towards the camera, we probably rolled a dozen versions of that for various reasons.

"Another interesting moment is when Uhura is in the hallway, sees dead bodies everywhere and turns to have a knife fight with herself. We were running out of time that day and really had to think fast, but we turned

05 *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, season two, "Subspace Rhapsody"

06 *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, season two, "Subspace Rhapsody"

07 Seetting up a night time scene for "Among the Lotus Eaters"

08 *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, season two, "Lost in Translation"

the lights off and played with darkness. There was a body double fighting Uhura like a doppelgänger, and it came out really well and we sold it in just a few shots. The horror moments were cool, but what I really loved in that episode was the descent, and the sense of dread.

"One of my favorite parts as a cinematographer was that we got to turn all the lights off!" Bakshi reveals. "We were riding the edge of darkness, and I don't think we've ever seen those *U.S.S. Enterprise* hallways like that, with this under-lit kind of glow. It was exciting to be able to take it that far, where flashlights were actually lighting the set."

Airing as the first-ever *Star Trek* musical episode, directed by Dermott Downs, "Subspace Rhapsody" generated a galaxy of goodwill towards this ambitious season and Bakshi relished the opportunity to unleash his considerable musical aptitudes into the cinematography plan.

"It kind of harkens back to music videos and I've done a cappella singing in other projects before, but this was definitely the first full-on musical project," he notes. "But my background is in music. I'm a cellist. It's not the same thing as being an actual singer but I've been around that world my whole life and I've played in pits for musicals. I get the timing, and knowing I'm going to be behind the camera, I'm bringing that mindset and combining it with a cinematography mindset. If something's not working musically, it affects everything, so the style of shooting needs to support how they're going to perform. There was a lot of working with Dermott, who's a cinematographer in his background. I had more prep time between "Lost in Translation" and "Subspace Rhapsody" and we spent it all prepping the musical.

"WE WERE PULLING FROM THE COLORS OF THE WORLD. THERE'S A NIGHTTIME RIGEL 7, AND A DAYTIME RIGEL 7."

One of the biggest questions in filming was whether or not these were music videos or scenes, and It became a clear consensus with the showrunners and everyone that these are scenes.

"It's most akin to *Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, shot like a movie in every way but they happen to be singing," Bakshi admits. "We did no music video techniques at all. It was a typical process where the actors give their feedback and we're figuring out what would be the most expressive and trying to pull it off in that time. When I finally watched it, I was basically eating popcorn. It was such a hoot. It was kind of hanging by a thread, the science of the alternate singing reality. They were okay with it just leaning on how much fun it is. Whatever the reasoning, just give us the song and dance!"

Benji Bakshi is online at benjibakshi.com

EXCLUSIVE FICTION

The Sirius Snarl

WORDS: KEITH R.A. DECANDIDO
ART: MIKE COLLINS

"My record's gone!"

Joann Owosekun looked up from her roasted hasperat to see that Keyla Detmer had joined her at the table in the *U.S.S. Discovery*'s mess hall. They had just finished their latest cargo run, delivering dilithium crystals from the newly restored source in the Verubin Nebula.

As Detmer sat down with her tray of steamed dumplings and broiled klongat leg, Owosekun asked, "What record?"

"The Sirius Snarl! They took it away from me!"

Owosekun washed down her hasperat with some allira punch and then asked, "Why is snarling so serious?"

Detmer hit her friend with her nastiest glare, made all the nastier by her cybernetic eye. "I've told you about the Sirius Snarl."

"Keyla," Owosekun said patiently, "we've spent the last three weeks dashing all over the Federation with hardly any breaks. At this point, I'm having difficulty remembering my own name."

With a smirk, Detmer said, "Your name is Jett Reno."

Owosekun nearly choked on her hasperat laughing at that. "Very funny," she said with her mouth full.

"The Sirius Snarl is the site of an ancient Menthar battle that destroyed multiple planets in the Sirius system. It's a navigational nightmare."

Holding up a finger, Owosekun said, "Wait, I think I recall now – this is that record you set at the Academy and then had to set it again when that woman from the *Enterprise* broke it, yes?"

Detmer nodded as she took a bite of her klongat. "I first heard about the Snarl in flight school when I was a kid. One of my teachers was one of the first humans to fly it, and she went on and on about how difficult it was – and what a thrill it was. You're *constantly* compensating, for gravitational fluctuations, for debris, for sensor ghosts because of the radiation that's *still* there a thousand years later. When I was at the Academy, I got the chance to do the Snarl." She smiled. "Fifty-nine minutes and ten seconds. Nobody'd done it in under an hour before."

"That's great." Owosekun tried to sound sincere. Detmer was her best friend, and she knew this sort of thing was important to her. For her part, she had no clue why anyone would deliberately fly through a navigation hazard unless you absolutely had no choice.

"Then, when I was on the *Shenzhou*, some hotshot ensign did it in fifty-eight minutes and fifty-nine seconds."

"That was Ortegas from the *U.S.S. Enterprise*, wasn't it?"

Nodding, Detmer said, "She wasn't on *Enterprise*

yet – rumor has it that Captain Pike had her transferred after she beat my record, though. Anyhow, I couldn't let *that* stand, so I asked Captain Georgiou to give me leave to get my record back." She took another quick bite of her klongat before continuing with a big grin. "She didn't give me leave – she changed course to the Sirius system so everyone on board could watch. It was great – every monitor on the *Shenzhou* was showing it, and Saru piped everyone cheering for me into the shuttlecraft. I blew through it in fifty-two minutes and three seconds."

"Impressive!"

"Oh, *now* you think it's impressive?" Detmer said teasingly.

Owosekun sighed. "I have participated in enough sporting events to know that records such as that are generally broken in small increments. You were only fifty seconds faster than the previous record."

"Fifty-one, actually," Detmer said sheepishly.

"And Ortegas was only eleven seconds faster. But to be nearly seven minutes faster? That's amazing, Keyla."

"Unfortunately, when we came to the future and they classified everything on *Discovery*, they also classified most of our Starfleet careers, including the time that Saru, Burnham, and I were on the *Shenzhou*. So Ortegas got the record back."

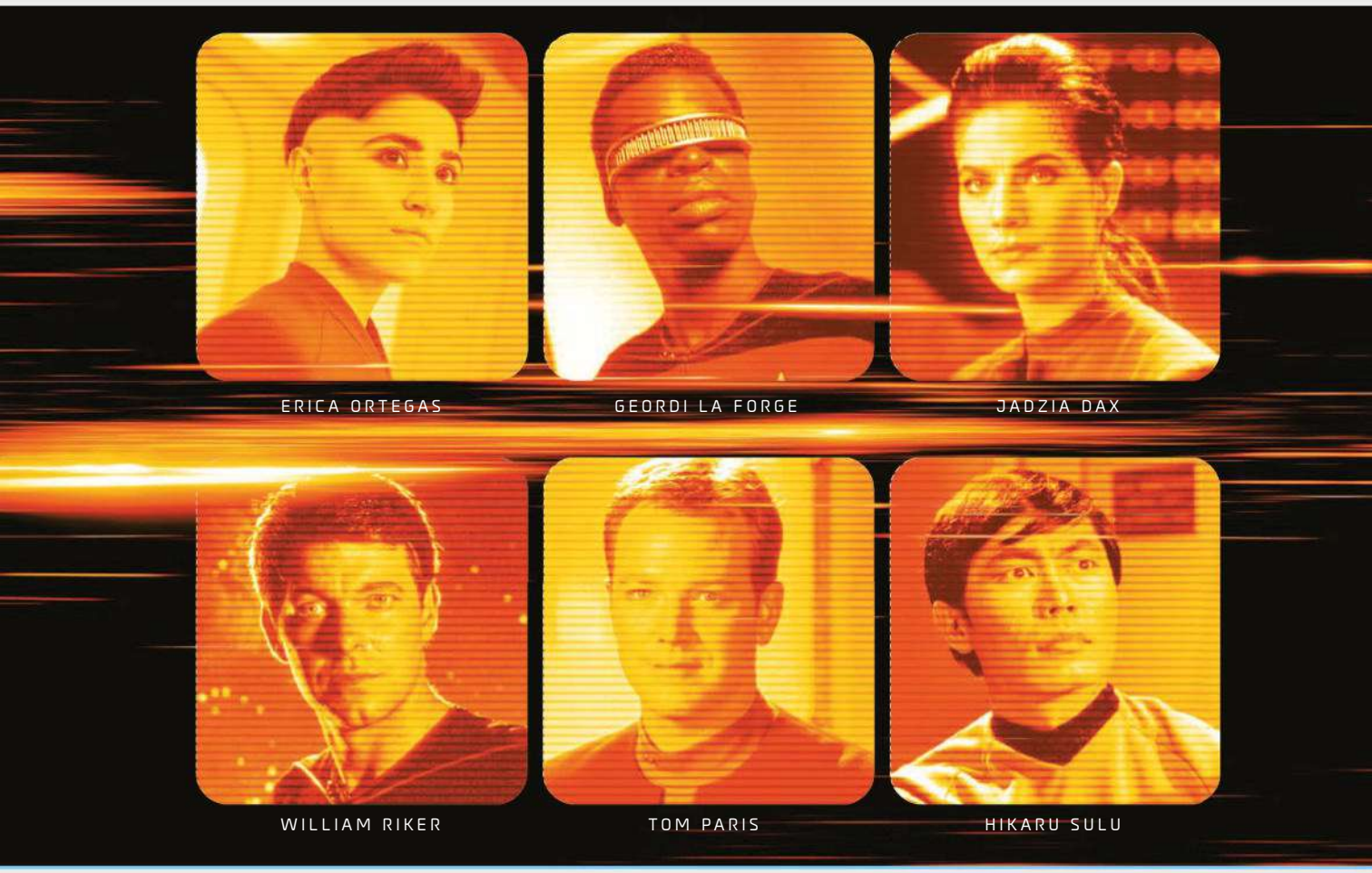
"It's been nine hundred years, Keyla. Surely *somebody* broke it."

Nodding, Detmer said, "Oh sure – lots of people broke *Ortegas*'s record." She summoned a holographic record into the air between them over the table. "In 2269, Lieutenant Hikaru Sulu, also of the *Enterprise*, did the Snarl in fifty-eight minutes and forty-two seconds. Then in 2298, when he was captain of the *U.S.S. Excelsior*, Sulu broke it *again*, this time at fifty-eight minutes and thirty-nine seconds. That record held until 2356, when an Academy cadet named William Riker did it in fifty-eight minutes and twenty-six seconds. Then a lieutenant named Geordi La Forge broke it in 2363 on the *Hood* – and Riker was first officer, and he replicated a medal for him for breaking *his* record, can you believe that?"

"I think that is a very sporting gesture."

"Hmph." Detmer scrolled down the display. "An ensign named Jadzia Dax did it in fifty-eight minutes and ten seconds in 2368 when she was assigned to Starbase 1 on Earth. Then in 2378, a Lieutenant Tom Paris did it in fifty-eight minutes and one second." She grinned. "This is my favorite – in 2400, Paris's daughter, Ensign Miral Torres Paris, did it in exactly fifty-eight minutes."

Owosekun blinked. "She beat her own father by one second?"



"WHEN I WAS AT THE ACADEMY, I GOT THE CHANCE TO DO THE SNARL." SHE SMILED. "FIFTY-NINE MINUTES AND TEN SECONDS. NOBODY'D DONE IT IN UNDER AN HOUR BEFORE."

"Yeah." Detmer chuckled. "And then her father – who was a commander at this point – broke *her* record at fifty-seven minutes and fifty-eight seconds. Those were probably some fun family dinners. Anyhow, another *Enterprise* pilot, Lieutenant Sidney La Forge, did it in fifty-seven minutes and forty seconds in 2407."

"Is she related to the La Forge who did it in 2363?"

"His daughter."

"What is it with daughters breaking their fathers' records?"

"Right?" She continued to scroll. "The same year as La Forge, a Captain Bradward Boimler did it in fifty-seven minutes and thirty-five seconds."

"Wait—is that the same person the Boimler Axiom is named after?"

"Probably? Anyhow, Boimler's record was broken in 2449 by a Vulcan admiral named T'Lyn, who did it in fifty-six minutes and fifty-four seconds. And that's still the official record, because in 2450, the Sirius Colony declared its independence and closed the system to outside ships."

"How come?"

Detmer shrugged. "Apparently, there was a revolution and a fascist state took over. They stayed isolationist until the Burn. And during the Burn, everybody had bigger problems. But they're back in the Federation now. And guess who's next on our delivery schedule?"

"Oh no." Owosekun sighed. "You're not going to –"

"Of course, I am!" Detmer wiped the hologram and stared intently at her friend. "Look, I left a lot behind when we jumped in time. But one of the things I held onto when we came to the future – to now – was that record. That was *mine*, and I knew no one would break it easily. And they didn't!" She threw up her hands. "That's what makes me crazy – all those people who did the Snarl and *none* of them even came *close* to my time!"

"That is why you're reading these old records now?" Owosekun asked. "Because we're going to Sirius?"

Detmer popped a dumpling into her mouth before answering. "Yeah," she said quietly. "I'd been avoiding looking, to be honest. At any of it. I knew that they were classifying a lot of what we did, but I didn't think they'd get rid of my record! And then I saw that Sirius was next on the dilithium list, so I looked up the Snarl."

"So now you want to try it?"

"Nobody has since Sirius opened back up. So this is my chance to make my mark."

Owosekun gave her a look. "I think we have *all* done that. We reversed the Burn and broke the Emerald Chain."

"That's what we did as a ship.

But the Sirius Snarl? That's *my* accomplishment. Just mine. But –" She hesitated.

Frowning, Owosekun prompted: "What is it, Keyla?"

"Will you come with me to ask Captain Burnham?"

"You cannot simply ask her yourself?"

At that, Detmer shuddered. "I – I don't know that the captain entirely *likes* me. I mean, we got along great on the *Shenzhou*, but then Captain Georgiou got killed and she was court-martialed, and when she came on *Discovery*, I –" She sighed, and ate another dumpling. "I just need some support, okay?"

"Okay." Owosekun smiled. "Anything for the record."

* * *

Two hours later, they sat in Captain Burnham's ready room. At Detmer's request – which she made in a quiet, demure voice, in contrast to her outrage in the mess hall –Burnham's eyes widened, as did her smile. "The Sirius Snarl. *That* takes me back. And they vacated your record?"

"They did," Detmer replied with a nod. "And nobody's beaten it. I – I want to get it back."

"It's been six hundred years since anyone even *did* the Sirius Snarl," Burnham said. "You sure you want to go through with it? I mean, *you* know you have the record."

"I –" Detmer hesitated.

Owosekun came to her friend's rescue. "We left everything behind, Captain. When we came to the future, we brought the best of ourselves, but only that. We left family and friends behind—but we also left a legacy that Starfleet classifying our lives and work took from us."

Nodding, Burnham said, "That's a good point." Then she smirked at Detmer. "I was wondering why you brought her along. But still, you could've asked me without a chaperone – or an advocate."

"No, Captain, I couldn't," Detmer said even more quietly. "I know you don't like me. And you've got every reason not to."

Burnham's face fell. "What? What makes you say that?"

"Because of how I treated you when you came on *Discovery*. I was horrible to you. I blamed you."

Waving a hand, Burnham said, "Everyone was horrible to me. Everyone blamed me. Hell, *I* blamed me. What happened at –"

"WHAT IS IT WITH DAUGHTERS BREAKING THEIR FATHERS' RECORDS?"

"No." Detmer said that syllable with more emotion and force than any word she'd spoken since entering the ready room. "I blamed you for *this*." She pointed at the left side of her face, at the cybernetic implants she'd received after a particularly brutal battle against the Klingons. "I asked Joann to come with me because I haven't been comfortable around you since you reported to *Discovery*. It hasn't been a big deal for the most part – I've dealt more with Captain Pike and Captain Saru than I have with you."

"Commander Detmer –" Burnham stopped herself. "Keyla. I do *not* dislike you. You had every reason to be mad at me, and I never once held that against you. But I knew something back on the *Shenzhou*, and you've reminded me of it over and over again both there and here on *Discovery*: there is absolutely *nobody* else I ever want flying this ship."

Detmer looked down at the deck shyly. "Thank you, Captain," she muttered.

"And also, permission to fly the Sirius Snarl granted."

Now Detmer looked up. "Really?"

"Absolutely. We've been running ourselves ragged for weeks. We could use a break, and watching the best pilot in the galaxy break one of the oldest piloting records in Starfleet history is definitely the way to do it."

* * *

Keyla Detmer sat in the cockpit of Shuttlecraft DSC 33. That was the one that she felt she could coax the best speed out of.

When she'd told Reno that, the chief engineer had replied, "You do know that these things all came out of the same industrial replicator, right? They're all the same."

"You engineers always say that," Detmer had replied, "but every ship is different. Each one has its own soul. And the soul of 33 is that of a cheetah."

"Whatever poetic nonsense helps you get to sleep at night," Reno said with a snort.

Owosekun's voice came over the comms. *"You're being seen by everyone on* Discovery*, and we're also sending it back to Federation HQ and any ship that wants to see it."*

"Good," Detmer said. If she was going to reclaim her record, she wanted as many people as possible to watch it happen.

She called up a sensor scan of the Snarl. The holographic readout showed that the debris had drifted a bit further apart, but some of the asteroidal matter had fused together to form larger bodies, which had greater gravitational fields.

This is gonna be a challenge.

And she wouldn't have it any other way.

"Computer," she said as she prepared to move forward, "start time."

From here, instinct took over. Her hands flew across the programmable matter-created console like a concert pianist's on the keys.

An asteroid was tumbling toward her. She steered around it, but then had to compensate for the gravitational pull. The deeper she got into the Snarl, the worse the radiation got, and sensors weren't always reliable.

So she depended on her eyes. And her instincts.

After at least three-quarters of an hour, she was only a few thousand kilometers from the other side of the Snarl.

But there was a giant rock in her path.

She brought the shuttle close to the surface, and then bounced off the asteroid's magnetic field. Thus boosted, she rode the impulse engines through to the other side at greater than top speed.

"Computer, time," she said as she brought 33 to a stop.

"Fifty-one minutes and forty-seven seconds."

Whoops and cheers from all over *Discovery* – from all over the Federation – came over the comms.

Owosekun's voice sounded over her combadge. *"You beat your own record! That was amazing!"*

"Yes, I did. And yes, I was."

The Sirius Snarl was Keyla Detmer's once again.

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO...

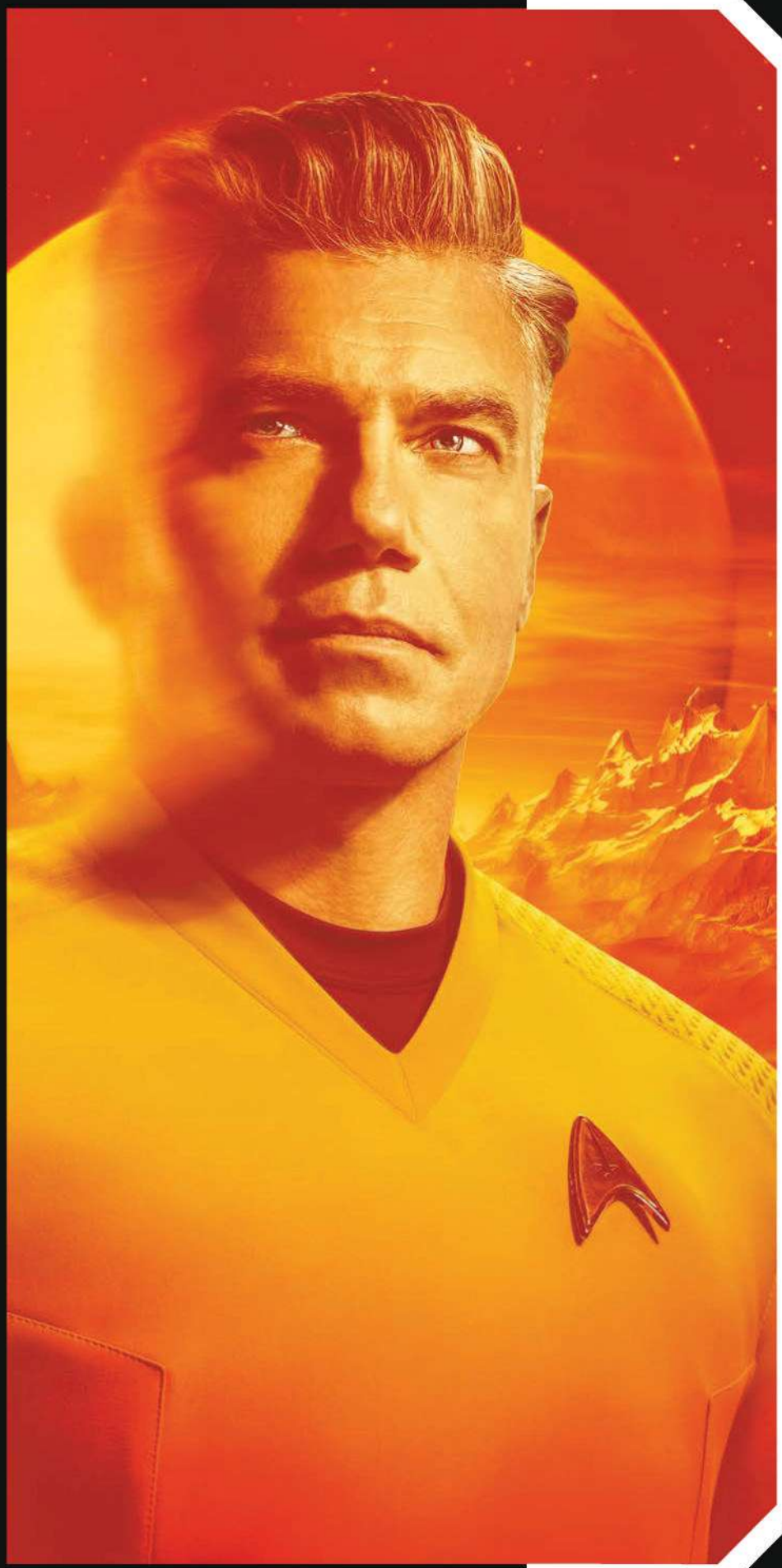
STAR TREK STRANGE NEW WORLDS

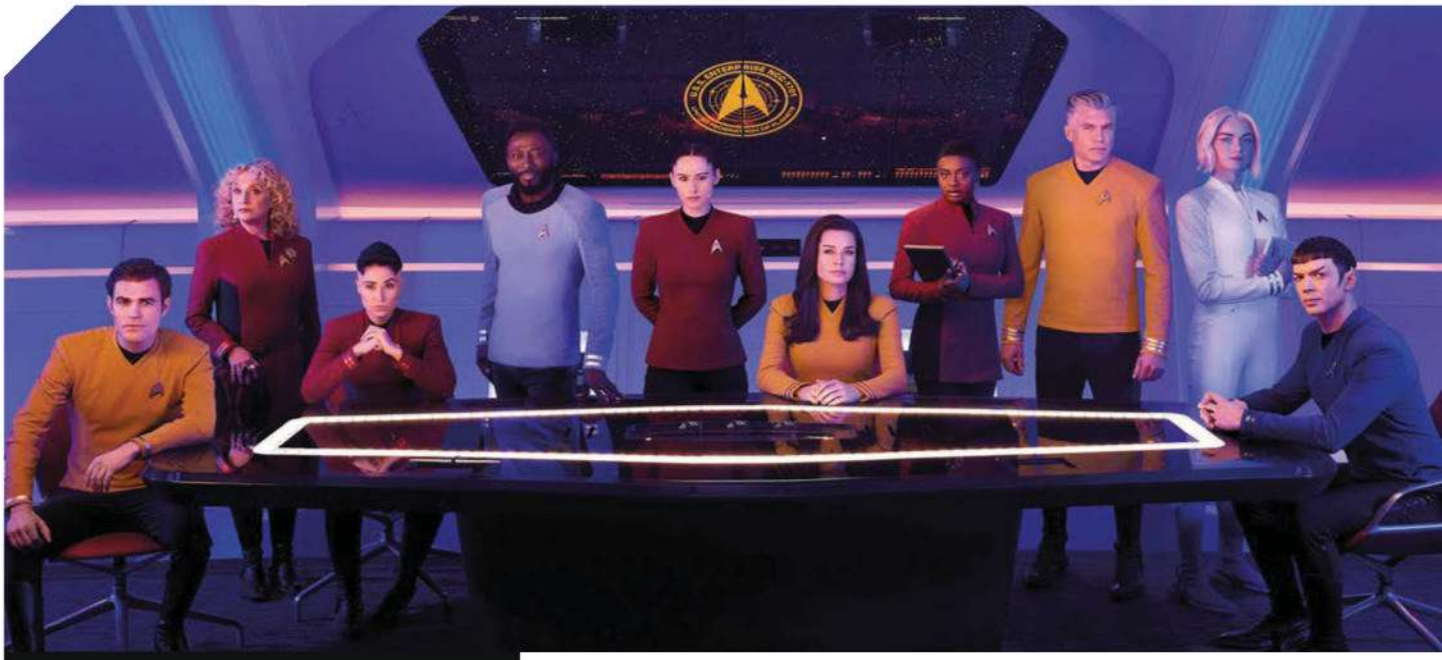
SEASON TWO!

A sophomore season with swagger. The sign of a show that knows it's firing on all thrusters... even though it was shot before the first season was out of drydock! That's testament to the strength of the crew – on and off screen. *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* soars by embracing the old-school *Star Trek* formula of a new story every week that encompasses bold science fiction, diverse genre storytelling and diligent character development. Anson Mount's Captain Pike continues to court promotion to the Best Ever Captain ranks of fan debate, all while the production team were confident enough to introduce the Big Kahuna of *Star Trek* – James T Kirk. They recognised they have an effective villain in the revamped Gorn that doesn't threaten the optimistic, quintessential Roddenberry outlook running through its warp core.

Here's *Star Trek Explorer*'s definitive guide to the soaring second season of *Strange New Worlds*...

WORDS: RICH MATTHEWS



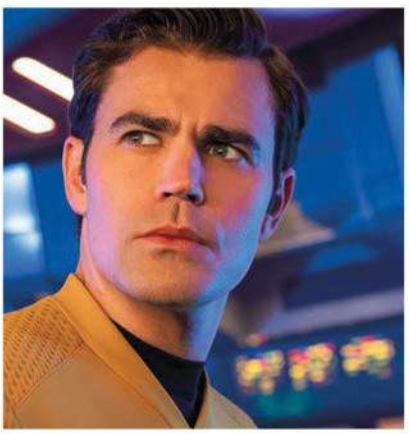


S2 VITALS

- **CREATED BY** Akiva Goldsman, Alex Kurtzman, Jenny Lumet
- **SEASON TWO SHOWRUNNERS:** Goldsman and Henry Alonso Myers
- **PRODUCED BY** CBS Studios
- **NETWORK:** Paramount+
- **PREMIERE DATE:** June 15, 2023
- **EPISODES:** 10
- **FINALE DATE:** August 10, 2023

S2 DIAGNOSTICS

- Filming began in early 2022 at CBS Stages Canada, Mississauga, Ontario.
- The first episode is dedicated to original Uhura, Nichelle Nichols following her death in July 2022; Anson Mount largely absent from the episode while on paternity leave.
- Showrunners Goldsman and Myers further committed to *Strange New Worlds* return to episodic storytelling by setting specific genres for individual episodes, including romance (albeit with a tragic time travelling twist), comedy, courtroom drama and musical (see boxout).
- New sets included the science lab, shuttle bay, nacelle room and port galley, *Strange New Worlds* version of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*'s Ten Forward – as it has no windows, there was no need for on-set virtual production, which streamlined shooting and saved budget.
- The Klingons' returned to the classic ridged forehead of the movies and Worf era, stepping away from the full-head redesign of *Star Trek: Discovery*. Myers publicly stated that Klingons were "a diverse species" with "many different looks".
- The new Kirk Paul Wesley used to live next door to William Shatner and ended up on the same plane shortly after his casting; Shatner gave his blessing.



CREW MANIFEST

Captain Christopher Pike
(ANSON MOUNT)

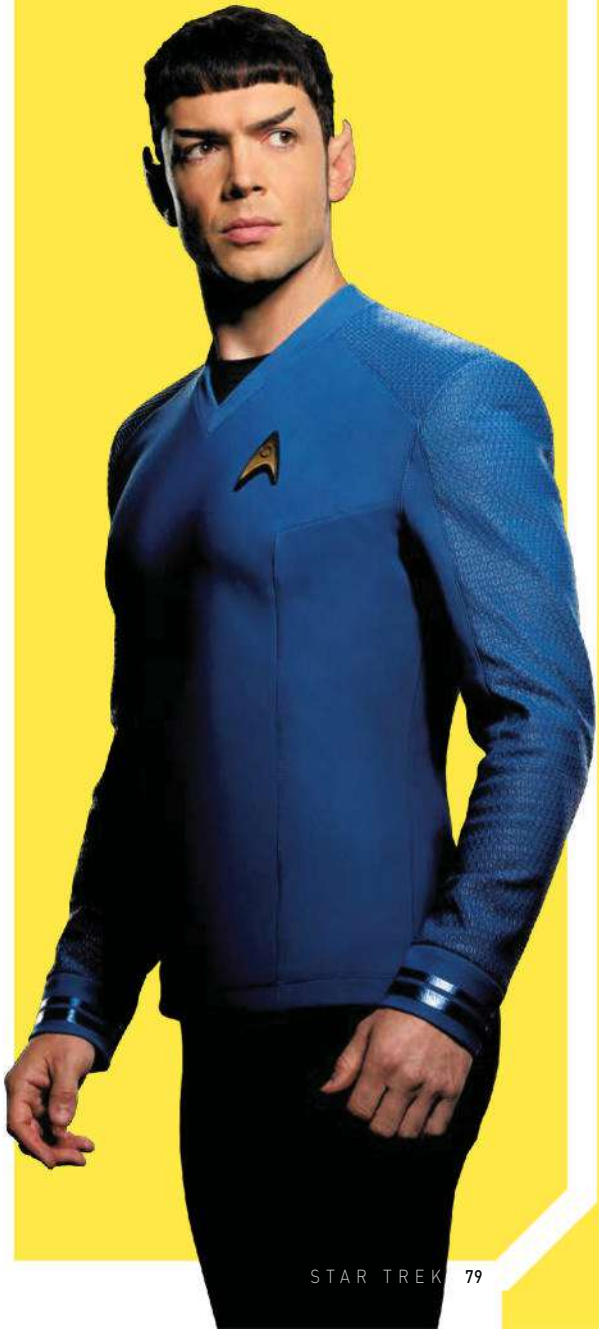
Captain Pike's personal life remains a series of professional and personal collisions which make his relationship with Captain Batel up and down, to say the least. All it took was a visit to a memory-wiping alien planet ruled by former *U.S.S. Enterprise* yeoman Zac Nguyen to make Pike realise how much Marie means to him ("Among the Lotus Eaters"). If we had a penny… Pike continued to show his unswerving loyalty for his crew; his support for Number One showed true grit, and his handling of M'Benga in the unsettling "Under the Cloak of War" proved calm, considered and deeply compassionate. Come season end, you're never in any doubt that Pike will disobey orders to save his people (and his love) from the Gorn. And that hair just gets better and better – it must be the sonic showers.

Commander Una Chin-Riley aka Number One
(REBECCA ROMIJN)

Una's arc was an actor's dream, as she stood trial for her species' (and her specific) genetic modification as an Illyrian. *Star Trek* has a long history of classic courtroom confrontations – "Measure of a Man", *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* and *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*, to name just a few – and "Ad Astra per Aspera" proved one of the best with episode helmer Valerie Weiss bringing her experience on several courtroom dramas with visual flourishes that kept Number One partially obscured until she took the stand and finally spoke openly – which included being her own whistle-blower. This action ultimately saves Una's career as fellow Illyrian Neera Ketoul (with whom Una has a choppy history) made the case that she was seeking asylum, a gambit that gives the judge just the wiggle room he needed to acquit.

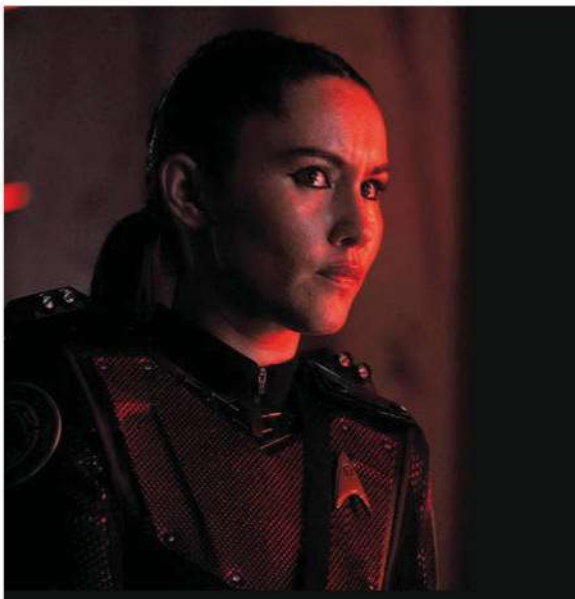
Lieutenant Spock
(ETHAN PECK)

Spock started to feel very much like his The Original Series self – partially due to his time being fully human (in hilarious episode, "Charades"), but also because of his fierce commitment to his crewmates, willingness to break the rules in the name of logic and ethics, and his burgeoning feelings for Chapel. Plus, he boozes with some Klingons. We also got to see the ever-excellent Ethan Peck interacting with Mia Kirshner as his human mother Amanda, and, perhaps, most importantly, his first canon meeting with one James T Kirk. Galactic goosebumps.



Nurse Christine Chapel
(JESS BUSH)

Season Two leaves the fate of Chapel in some doubt, having been offered a prestigious Archaeological Medicine fellowship that would take her off the *U.S.S. Enterprise* – and away from Spock. It didn't help that she had to sing about it ("Subspace Rhapsody"). This was also just after we got to see many more levels from her experiences with M'Benga on the frontlines of the Federation-Klingon war ("Under the Cloak of War"). However, fear not, because season three trailers suggest Jess is back for season three…



La'An Noonien-Singh
(CHRISTINA CHONG)

After a leave of absence at the end of season one, La'An is brought back into the fray to thwart a restart of the Federation-Klingon War ("The Broken Circle"). This was immediately followed by worries that she had "outed" Una as an Illyrian, *then* getting thrown back in time to fall in love with an alternate Kirk who ultimately dies helping her save future Kirk nemesis (and her ancestor) Khan Noonien Singh (a necessary if identity-scrambline act for her), only to be rejected by the *real* Kirk because he's already dating future mother of his child Carol Marcus. It's a wonder she doesn't rue the day she re-joined the *U.S.S. Enterprise*!

Cadet Nyota Uhura
(CELIA ROSE GOODING)

After deciding Starfleet *was* for her, Uhura's season two saw her well on her journey to being an exceptional officer. Her personal growth continued in "Lost in Translation" as she realised, with crucial Kirk assistance, that she had to process her grief over her parents and Hemmer, while also remaining present enough to recognise her dreams/hallucinations were actually messages sent by aliens being slaughtered by deuterium mining. She also got loosened up a bit by Beckett Mariner (see boxout), which may or may not be connected to her accidentally triggering a musical infestation. She formed a good partnership with Pelia, which was fitting, given her closeness to Hemmer, which came in handy when fighting the Gorn in the series finale.

Lieutenant Erica Ortegas
(MELISSA NAVIA)

We're still waiting for that one kick-ass Ortegas episode, but the ebullient, quipping helmsperson continued to bounce around, offering support left and right, cracking off one-liners and generally being awesome. We're hoping that not only will she prove instrumental in getting away from the Gorn but that her moment in the *Strange New Worlds* spotlight is just around that Jefferies junction. In the meantime, even when she loses her memories in "Among the Lotus Eaters" she saves the day by using the computer to work out who she is and what she does on the ship, relying on her natural instincts to pilot through an asteroid field: "I am Erica Ortegas. I fly the ship!"

Doctor Joseph M'Benga
(BABS OLUSANMOKUN)

M'Benga has been through a *lot*. Keeping his dying daughter in a transporter buffer for years before she left with celestial entities in season one, and now a sickbay full of PTSD from his time in a field hospital fighting the Klingons. He even took a drug that made him a super-soldier to go on a Klingon killing spree – which is how he knows that new peace-touting Ambassador Dak'Rah is lying. The only good that came from all that was his close working relationship with Chapel, shown at its height when foiling cross-species conspirators in "The Broken Circle". We actually feel a bit sorry for the Gorn that captured the good doctor at the end of "Hegemony".

PERMISSION TO COME ABOARD

Admiral Robert April
(ADRIAN HOLMES)

Be an Admiral on *Star Trek* long enough and you'll see yourself end up a "Badmiral" (we're looking at you, Nechayev), the role April finds himself in this season by prosecuting Una, reprimanding Spock, ordering the crew not to go after their comrades into Gorn space and violating the Prime Directive!

Chief Engineer Hemmer
(BRUCE HORAK)

The late engineer returned, Tasha Yar-style, via a recording viewed by grieving Uhura in "Lost in Translation", while Horak got a quintessential made-possible-by-make-up double dip as Garkog, the singing Klingon general in "Subspace Rhapsody".

Lieutenant George Samuel "Sam" Kirk
(DAN JEANNOTTE)

It's like poor xenoanthropologist Sam knows he's only on the *Enterprise* to entice a visit from his little bro – particularly when he's part of the contingent grabbed by the Gorn in the final episode.

Chief Engineer Pelia
(CAROL KANE)

Hemmer's replacement is played by iconic actress Carol Kane – of *Princess Bride*, *Scrooged* and *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* fame – a spiky-yet-fun Lathanite (looks human but lives looooong – prospering unknown). Bit like El-Aurian Guinan. Kane created a special accent for Pelia so the audience wouldn't know where she hailed from and, while diametrically different in personality to Hemmer, managed to keep things 'lively' in Engineering. Pelia also taught one Montgomery Scott everything he knows…

Captain Marie Batel
(MELANIE SCROFANO)

When the writers start to flesh out your recurring character, especially if said character is in a relationship with the lead, one might get the creeping feeling that something nasty is around the corner… Batel got some meaty duties in season two, not least as lead prosecutor of Number One in and during a sung spat in front of the whole crew in "Subspace Rhapsody", but sadly, the Captain was a key part of the season cliff hanger. Will it still end well for her?

T'Pring
(GIA SANDHU)

Talk about rocky romances, poor T'Pring had to put up with Spock being made fully human! He's goofily charming, but it's hardly surprising the Vulcan needed a break after that fiasco.

THE GOATS

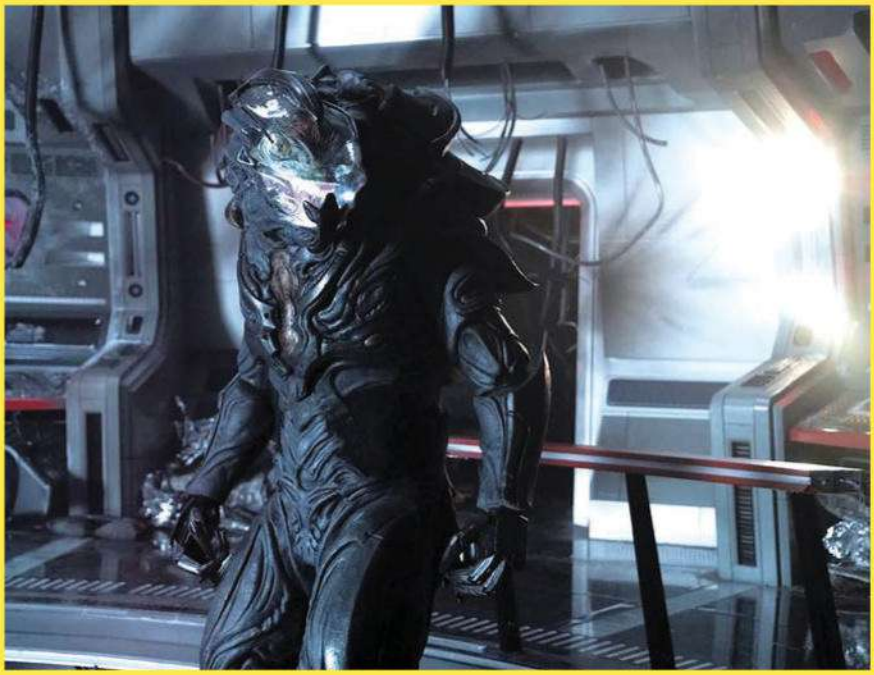
We all adore Pike, no question, but when James T Kirk beamed onboard the *U.S.S Enterprise* in "Lost In Translation" there's no denying the excitement and sheer glee. Beyond the Trinity of Kirk, Spock and McCoy, the *U.S.S. Enterprise* is Jim's most central, longstanding relationship and seeing his first moments onboard was special. On top of that we got to see him extensively interact with Uhura, showing his astute future-Captain insight, as he helps her work through her grief over Hemmer. Then we got the biggie… at the end of the episode Uhura casually introduces Kirk to Spock. Mic drop. Now all we need is Bones…

MIRACLE WORKER

Showrunner Henry Alonso Myers was adamant he wanted to cast an actual Scot as the future miracle working engineer, so stage actor Martin Quinn got the call (after more than 30 actors were considered) to lend his authentic brogue to Scotty (following a "voice only" cameo by another actor at the end of season one). It paid off, because when a male Scottish accent is heard on *Star Trek* it holds a particular frisson for the audience and Scotty's arrival is an undoubted high point.

WARBLING FREQUENCIES OPEN

Ah, there's nothing quite like an improbability field generated by a mysterious subspace fold. (You won't get a more *Star Trek* sentence than that!) Specifically, Uhura's sending of the song "Anything Goes" into the fold plunged the *U.S.S. Enterprise* crew into a musical. First mooted by Alex Kurtzman for a "Short Trek", Myers was inspired by "Once More With Feeling" from *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* as "really smart and thoughtful", so the songs' expression of heretofore private thoughts and emotions brought genuine character development. Ten songs were written by Kay Hanley and Tom Polce, including a sung version of Jeff Russo's main theme – all of which can be found on the official episode soundtrack! And if that didn't convince you, two words: singing Klingons. Second mic drop.



GORN AGAIN

The reptilian aliens are back, but this time they're all grown up. Echoing back to *Star Trek: The Next Generation*'s epic season finales, the Gorn's 'Big Bad' return in "Hegemony" was grimly effective. The new look of the adult aliens is particularly striking - the decision to hold them until later in the season to give more design and build time to the production team paid dividends. They're marauding, relentless and scary, and we're left holding our breaths for season three. A bold move, considering the show didn't have a renewal at the time! Relax, relax – it does now.

DOUBLE CROSS

Fittingly directed by beloved franchise vet and *Star Trek: Lower Decks* Riker voice Jonathan Frakes, "Those Old Scientists" (a call-back to a *Lower Decks* joke about the Kirk era being called TOS in-universe) was *Strange New Worlds* first crossover, boldly bringing the animated characters of Beckett Mariner (Tawney Newsome) and Bradward Boimler (Jack Quaid) into three dimensions thanks to a classic time portal McGuffin. *Lower Decks* showrunner Mike McMahan helped with the show's dialogue to retain the tone of the animated series, while Quaid studied *Lower Decks* episodes so his physical performance matched Boimler's animated antics. Pleasingly, given it is 'loose cannon' Mariner, Newsome was just herself. Both were allowed to improvise to capture the "boisterous, fun energy" the pair brought to the SNW set, according to Ethan Peck – whose immediate bond with Quaid led to the nickname 'Spoimler' among the cast and crew. The episode also featured the animated versions of Tendi (Noël Wells), Rutherford (Eugene Cordero) and Ransom (Jerry O'Connell).

VISITING DIGNITARIES

Season two also saw one in-universe icon and one real life *Star Trek* legend make an appearance. When Spock's engagement ritual was disrupted by the Kerkohvians making him completely human, none other than his mother Amanda (played by Mia Kirshner) boarded the ship to help him. Kirshner is the third actor to play Grayson (after Jane Wyatt in The Original Series and *Star Trek IV*, and Winona Ryder in the Kelvin timeline) and we can't wait to see her partner with James Frain's Sarek from *Star Trek: Discovery.*

Meanwhile, the dark, contemplative Klingon War saga "Under The Cloak of War" saw none other than "The Corbomite Maneuver"'s Balok himself, Trek royalty Clint Howard, appear as Chief Medical Office Commander "Buck" Martinez working with Chapel and M'Benga on the front. Between his child star turn on The Original Series and *Strange New Worlds*, Howard also appeared on *Star Trek: Deep Space*, *Star Trek: Enterprise* and *Discovery*.

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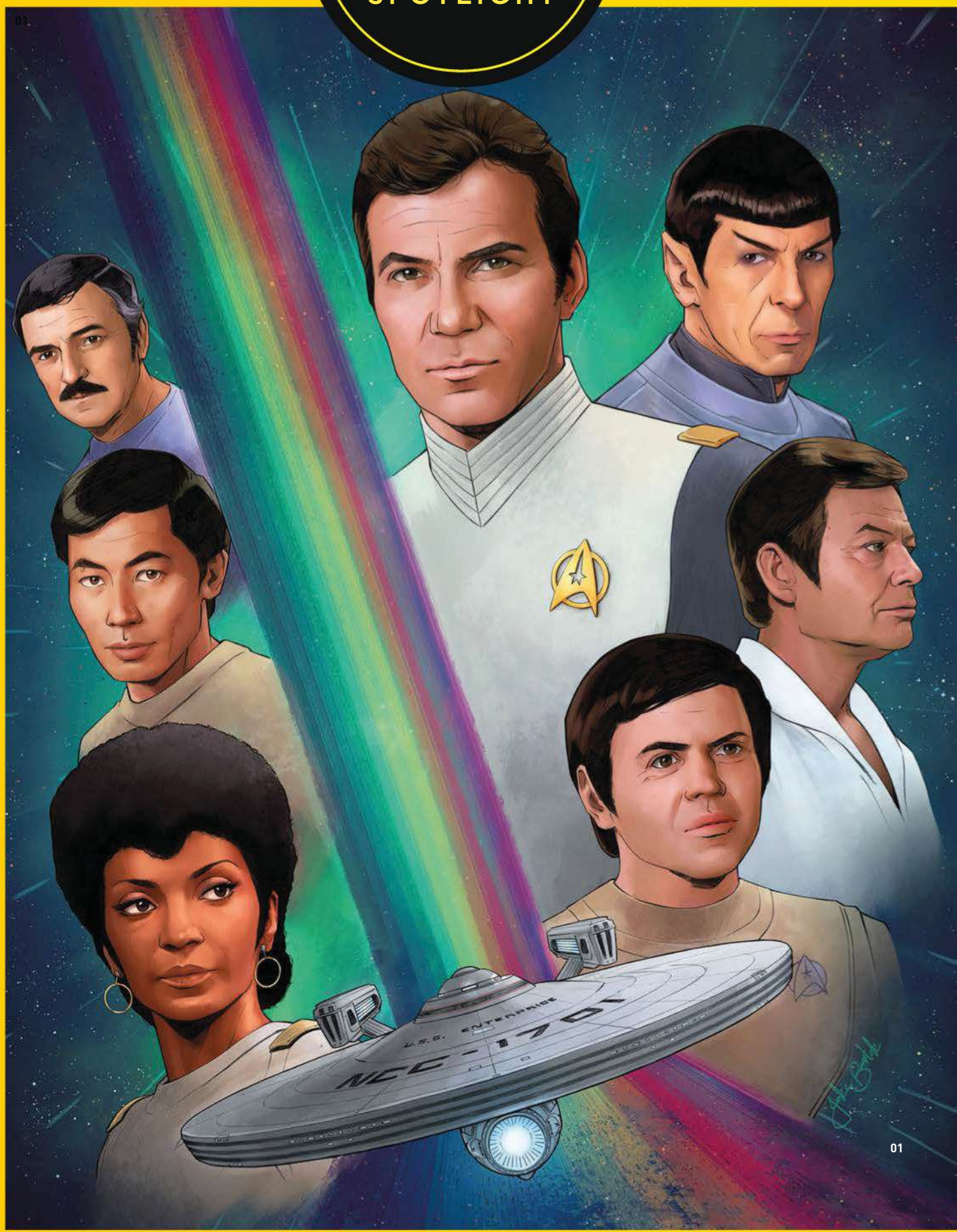
COMIC SPOTLIGHT



01

Echoes of V'Ger:

IDW Revisits *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*

BY RICH HANDLEY

With nearly 900 episodes and films, nearly 900 novels, and more than a thousand comics to date, it's not always easy for *Star Trek* creators to find ideas that existing stories have not already explored. One clever way in which writers have kept things new has been by occasionally revisiting something old – namely, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*. Marc Guggenheim is the latest writer to examine the movie from a new perspective.

Over the course of his expansive career, Guggenheim has created or produced the television shows *Arrow*, *Eli Stone*, *Law & Order*, *Legends of Tomorrow*, and *Tales of Arcadia*, and he's amassed a great deal of experience with world-building. After writing such comics as *Aquaman*, *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *Blade*, *The Flash*, *The Punisher*, *Star Wars*, and *Wolverine*, he joined the *Star Trek* franchise with IDW's 2023 miniseries *Star Trek: The Motion Picture – Echoes*. This was the first comic book since *Marvel Comics Super Special*, released in 1979, and Pocket Books' *The Photostory* (1980) to include that movie's name in its title.

02

"*The Motion Picture* was what introduced me to *Star Trek*," Guggenheim says. "I'd seen pieces of The Original Series here and there, when my father would watch the show in syndication, and I was very aware of *Trek* thanks to Mego's toy line. But the very first *Star Trek* story I watched from start to finish was *The Motion Picture*, so that era stands out in my memory. Admittedly, there was a lot I didn't understand, watching it as a young kid relatively unfamiliar with *Star Trek*, but the grandeur of the *U.S.S. Enterprise* refit and the great character work – McCoy's return is a standout moment – really drew me in."

Echoes takes place directly after the V'Ger incident and is tied to the film in terms of tone, aesthetics, and existential dilemma. It revolves around an alternate universe in which Pavel Chekov is a genocidal criminal called Akris, hunted by that reality's Nyota Uhura. A spatial anomaly propels them both into the prime universe, where Romulans seek to obtain Akris's devastating superweapon. The other Uhura allies with the Starfleet crew to prevent galactic war, while prime Uhura and Chekov are forced to face their own darker sides mirrored in their counterparts.

The Akris plot moves the miniseries forward, though what matters most to Guggenheim is what the comic has to say about the characters, including a side plot that sees James T. Kirk dreading the daunting likelihood of having to give up command in the wake of V'Ger, and return once more to the admiralty. Pocket Books published numerous post-*TMP* novels, and both Marvel Comics and particularly the *L.A. Times* Syndicate produced ongoing comic lines set in that era, which has been called Kirk's second five-year mission. Peter Pan Records, DC Comics, and IDW have also explored the post-V'Ger period, and *Echoes* represents the start of that second mission.

Guggenheim acknowledges that *The Motion Picture* isn't everyone's cup of Earl Grey. "I don't want to risk disappointing anyone," he says, "but I would say that it's *very* tied to the events of *The Motion Picture*. Remember that the *Enterprise* crew was mostly reconstituted for the purposes of dealing with the V'Ger crisis. Once that crisis was over,

there was really no reason for Kirk and McCoy to remain aboard. And yet, we imagine that they did. The question I wanted to ask is, *why*? So, while *Echoes* isn't primarily about what kept the *Enterprise* crew together post-V'Ger, I was very interested in exploring the answers to that question."

Echoes was advertised as featuring "enemies both terrifying and shockingly familiar," involving "doppelgängers of our beloved heroes," but Guggenheim is quick to note that the miniseries isn't what fans might expect from that description. "First off, this most certainly isn't a mirror universe tale," he states. "I love the mirror universe, and we absolutely reference it, but I was intrigued by the idea of introducing a new and different alternate reality. If there are an infinite number of parallel universes, it seemed a shame to me that we've almost exclusively visited the mirror universe."

By introducing a universe separate from the mirror reality – and from myriad other corners of the *Star Trek* multiverse (Kelvin, *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC 1701-C, backwards-time, antimatter, photonic, magic-based, fluidic, Borg-controlled, etc.) – Guggenheim says he hoped to depict the *Enterprise* crew from a different vantage point. "The vast majority of *Star Trek* stories – of *any* era – are always told from the point of view of the crew," he explains. "I wanted to get into the headspace, at least a little bit, of people who are unfamiliar with Kirk *et al.*, and get their point of view on these beloved characters."

In that effort, Guggenheim was assisted by artist Oleg Chudakov and colorist DC Alonso, who produced vibrant and beautifully detailed interior art. The miniseries sported a wide variety of cover variants from not only Chudakov, but also Mark Alvarado, Jake Bartok, James Gray, Aaron Harvey, Steffi Hochriegl, Liana Kangas, J.J. Lendl, Megan Levens, Rod Reis, Luke Sparrow, Erik Tamayo, and J.K. Woodward.

"Oleg and DC are incredible," Guggenheim enthuses, "and they've been remarkable to work with. I think they really succeeded in threading the needle of re-envisioning these very familiar characters for the medium of comics. I like that *Echoes* feels like a comic book, not just a series of storyboards for a TV show or movie." He describes how he approached scripting *Echoes*: "When I write any comic, I try to provide as much visual reference as possible. That's especially true when I'm working with a licensed property like *Star Trek*. I tried to make Oleg and DC's lives as easy as possible by putting in as much reference as I could get my hands on."

> "I'M VERY FORTUNATE THAT I'VE BEEN INVITED TO PLAY WITH THE TOYS I LOVED GROWING UP – AND STILL LOVE AS AN ADULT…"

01 IDW'S *Star Trek: The Motion Picture, Echoes #1*

02 Marc Guggenheim

03 IDW'S *Star Trek: The Motion Picture, Echoes #1*, cover B

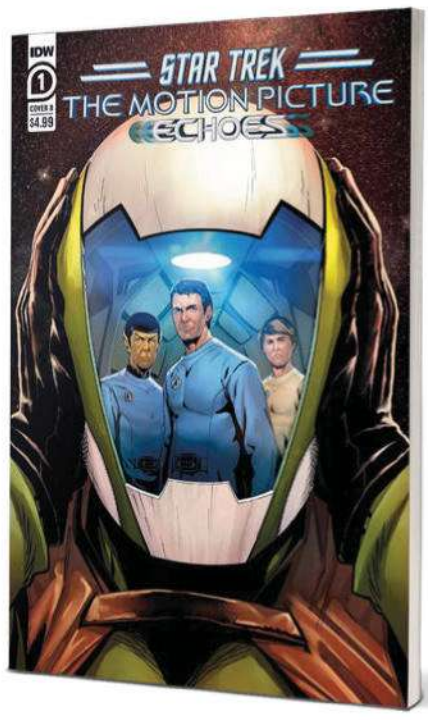
04 IDW'S *Star Trek: The Motion Picture, Echoes #2*

05 IDW'S *Star Trek: The Motion Picture, Echoes #3*

06 IDW'S *Star Trek: The Motion Picture, Echoes #4*

07 IDW'S *Star Trek: The Motion Picture, Echoes #5*

08 IDW'S *Star Trek: The Motion Picture, Echoes #1 interior art*



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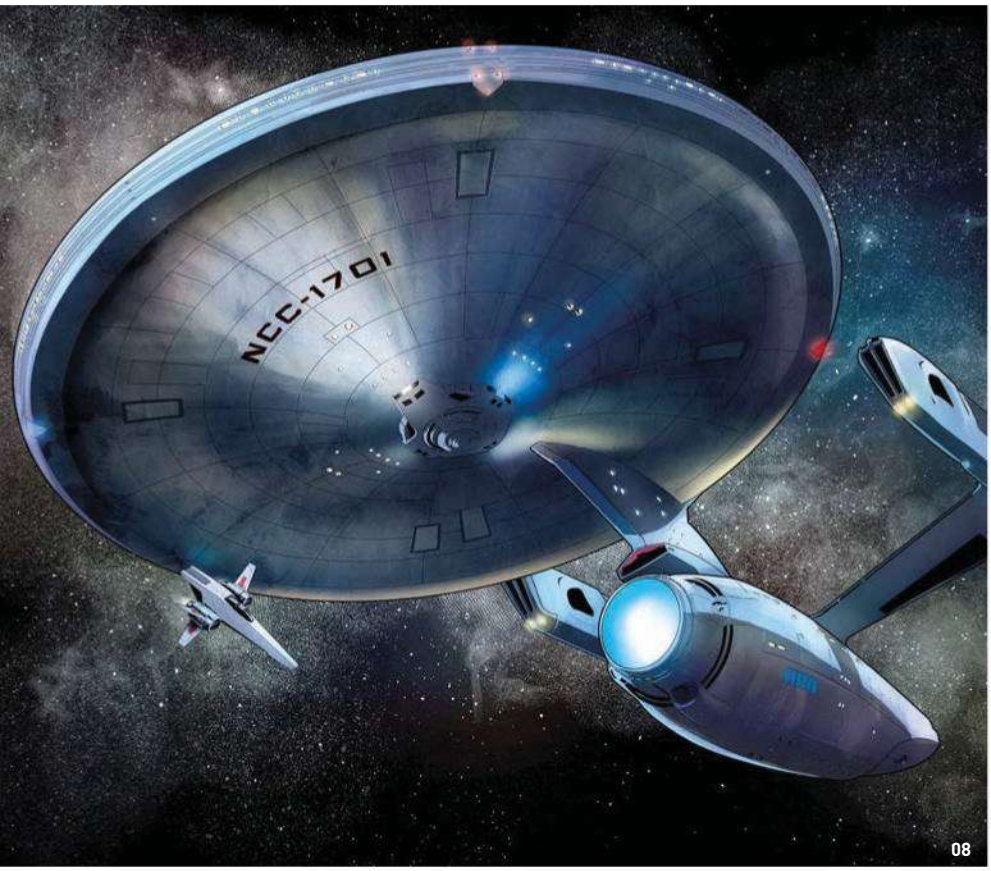

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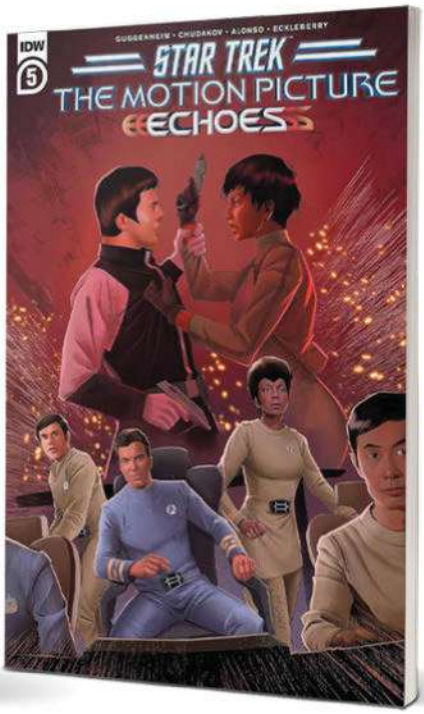


07

The "Lost Years" era, as Pocket Books dubbed the second five-year mission, has been utilized only sparingly in comics, despite the enormous untapped storytelling potential, so Guggenheim sought to bring that era to the forefront. "A lot of the *Star Trek* I consumed growing up was the original Marvel Comic, and many of the Pocket novels," he recalls, "although I always felt the latter suffered a bit from 'false advertising,' insofar as many of the covers featured Kirk and crew in their *The Moyion Picture* looks and/or a post-refit *U.S.S. Enterprise*, but the stories were clearly set during the original five-year mission."

Guggenheim suggests that when it comes to comics, "I suspect the reason we haven't seen many stories set circa *The Motion Picture* is due to the unfortunate fact that the movie is much maligned." He cites the crew's trouser/top outfits and one-piece jumpsuits, which alternate Uhura disdainfully describes as "pajamas," echoing fans who have called them that for decades. "For sure, the visuals – and, of course, I'm talking about the uniforms primarily – aren't beloved by most. So I think those two factors have conspired to keep this era relatively untouched." Guggenheim is curious whether sales will confirm an audience for post-V'Ger comics, and that he'd love to write an *Echoes* sequel if so.

"I'm very fortunate that I've been invited to play with the toys I loved growing up – and still love as an adult," Guggenheim says, adding, "There are a lot of wonderful and inspiring thoughts about *Star Trek*. Its aspirational quality and messages are beautiful. But for my money, '*Star Trek* lives' because of its characters. I think we lose sight of that because there have been so many crews since The Original Series, but the really successful *Star Trek* properties are the ones with interesting and compelling characters at their center."

The Star Trek: The Motion Picture – Echoes collection was released by IDW in March and is available from all good book comic shops

Is This All That There Are? Is There Nothing More?

James T. Kirk and the *U.S.S. Enterprise* are legendary, and a sizable portion of all *Star Trek* comics have involved that crew. However, only a fraction have centered around their second five-year mission – the so-called "Lost Years" – following *The Motion Picture*. The franchise's theatrical debut turns 45 years old in 2024, and while it has received criticism for its pensive pacing and plentiful reaction shots, a lot of fans (this article's writer among them) consider it one of the greatest *Trek* adventures ever told. After reading *Echoes*, why not track down the following comics built around *The Motion Picture*'s characters and concepts? After all, the human adventure is just beginning.

Peter Pan Records
Book-and-record set: *Dinosaur Planet* (1979)
Book-and-record set: *The Robot Masters* (1979)

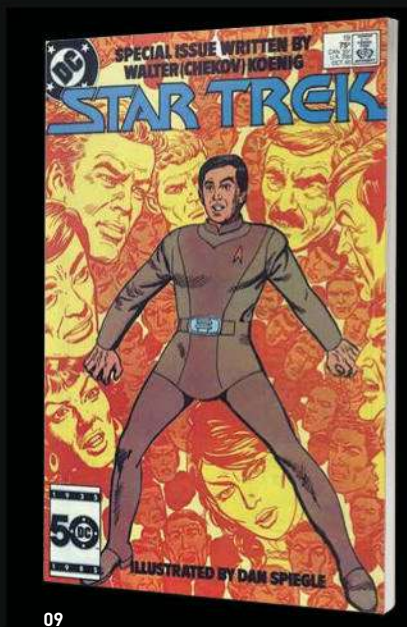
Marvel Comics
Adaptation: *Marvel Comics Super Special* #15 (series 1, 1979)
Star Trek #1–18 (series 1, 1980–1982)
Star Trek: Untold Voyages #1–5 (series 2, 1998)

Los Angeles Times Syndicate
Newspaper strips: 1,416 daily strips, 20 storylines (1979–1983)
IDW collection: *Star Trek: The Newspaper Comics* #1–2 (2012–2013)

DC Comics
Star Trek #19 (series 1, 1985)
Star Trek Annual #2 (series 1, 1986)
Star Trek Annual #3 (series 1, 1988)
Star Trek Annual #2 (series 2, 1991)
Star Trek: Debt of Honor (series 2, 1992)
Star Trek #75 (series 2, 1995)

IDW Publishing
Spock: Reflections #2 (2009)
Star Trek: Nero #3 (2009)
Leonard McCoy, Frontier Doctor #1–4 (2010)
Star Trek: Infestation #1–2 (2011)
Star Trek: New Visions #5 (2015)
Star Trek: Waypoint Special #1 (2018)
Star Trek: Year Five #25 (2021)

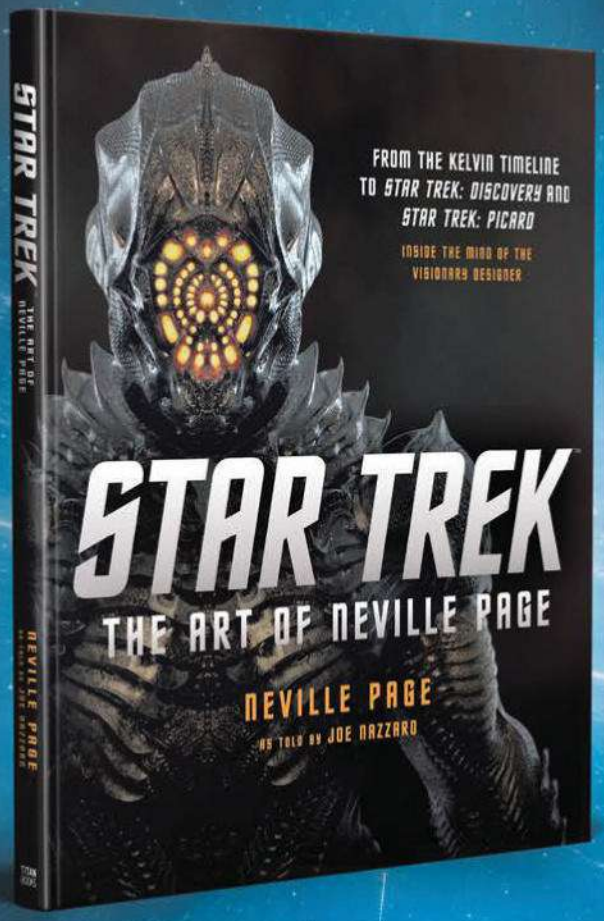
Miscellaneous
McDonalds strips: Happy Meal boxes, Video Communicator toys (1979)
Larami strips: *Star Trek* Space Viewer rack toy (1979)
Pocket Books adaptation: *ST:TMP – The Photostory* (1980)
Advertorial strip: "The Great Weetabix Adventure" (1980)
Parody, *MAD* #216: "Star Blecch: The (Gacck!) Motion Picture" (1980)
Chinese *lianhuanhua* adaptation: *The Star Trek* (1983)
Star Trek: The Webcomic: "The Motion Picture Redux" (2020)



09 DC Comics' *Star Trek* #19

10 IDW's *Star Trek: Infestation #1*

11 Marvel's *Star Trek: Untold Voyages #1*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FROM THE KELVIN TIMELINE TO STAR TREK: DISCOVERY AND STAR TREK: PICARD
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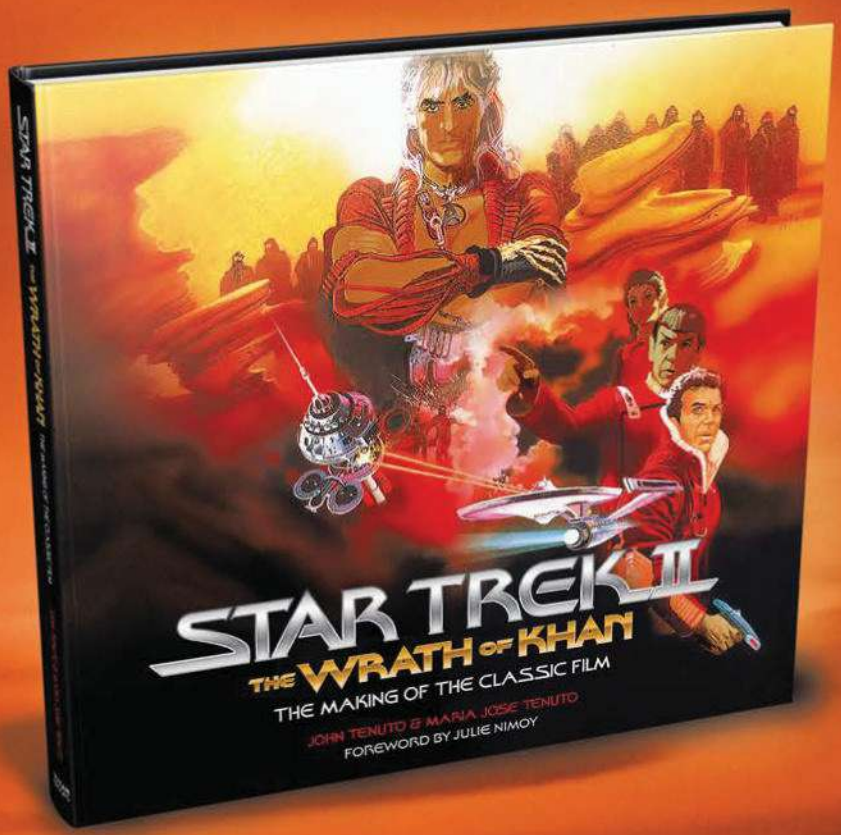

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TREK FOR LIFE: SPECIAL EDITION

This issue's *Trek for Life* opens with a special tribute by Chris Gardner to the late, much appreciated John Trimble – an early *Star Trek* fan whose campaigning work, if not successful, might well have meant no *Star Trek* for any of us...

JOHN TRIMBLE: AN APPRECIATION

Without John Trimble, who died on April 19, 2024, aged 87, there would have been no "Save *Star Trek*" letter writing campaign, and without that, there would have been no *Star Trek,* after the second season wrapped.

John's wife Bjo, short for Betty JoAnne, was heralded in the media in 1968 for keeping *Star Trek* on air for a third and final season. But she has always noted John's contribution to that early, pioneering campaign to save the television show from cancellation.

"It's all John Trimble's fault," Bjo told *Star Trek Magazine* in 2017.

As a result of their success, William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy and DeForest Kelley, who played Captain James T Kirk, First Officer Spock and Dr Leonard "Bones" McCoy, and their co-stars, owed John and Bjo. A third season provided *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry with enough episodes to sell for syndication. Endless re-runs of the shows 1966-69 run, coupled with the success of the first *Star Wars* film, led to a jump to the big screen with *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* in 1979.

Arguably, all the *Star Trek* shows that followed the original, from *Star Trek: The Animated Series* to *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds*, all owe their existence to the outcomes of the Trimbles letter writing campaign to "Save *Star Trek*".

John Trimble grew up in Devils Lake, North Dakota and graduated from Poly High School in Long Beach, California. He enlisted in the US Air Force in 1955, and served in the Air Rescue Service in Korea, Japan and Taiwan during the Korean War.

He met Bjo at a crowded party hosted by American magazine editor, science fiction writer and literary agent Forrest J. Ackerman. The pair were among a group of fans who

crawled under his baby grand piano with chips to avoid being stepped on. The pair married in 1960 and remained so for 63 years.

The Trimbles first met Gene Roddenberry at the World Science Fiction Convention, Tricon, in Cleveland, Ohio, in early September 1966. Roddenberry previewed early episodes at the convention ahead of their broadcast, and persuaded Bjo to showcase *Star Trek* costumes during her fan-made costume competition.

The Trimbles were also invited to visit the *Star Trek* set during the filming of the second season episode "The Deadly Years", where they learned, from the unlikely source of the craft services man, of the show's impending cancellation, because NBC was unhappy with its ratings. His news explained the somber atmosphere.

"On the way home, John said we ought to be able to do something about that and I agreed," Bjo told *Star Trek Magazine*. So, they called Gene Roddenberry to see how they could help him. "He had been talking to his staff, trying to figure out how to reach the fans, when we called."

In the days before personal computers, email, the internet, and social media, the Trimbles created a database of fans names and addresses using a Rolodex rotating card file device. They wrote to fans asking them to write to NBC and its sponsors, asking them to keep the show on the air, and asked fans to pass their letter on to 10 more fans. The Trimbles called it the "Rule of Tens".

The Trimbles also invited friends and fans for dinner, dragooning them into helping with the "Save *Star Trek*" campaign.

"Some fan-friends came in from other areas to sleep on our living room floor and work on the campaign all weekend. And the dining room, the kitchen, and basement, where the printing press was kept."

John and Bjo led a second letter writing campaign as the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) prepared to roll out its first space shuttle in 1976. Shuttle OV-101 was originally to be named *Constitution*, but Bjo and John led a second letter writing campaign asking President Gerald Ford to name her *Enterprise*.

The Trimbles also originated the WorldCom Art Shows and stewarded them for 17 years and were active members of the Society for Creative Anachronism, a medieval re-enactment organization.

So why did John never get the credit he deserved?

"The feminist movement was high at that time, so 'the little woman' was better news," Bjo said. "I was always the one interviewed and poor John got left out of everything! Without him, there would have been no campaign."

Thank, you, John.

COSPLAY COLLECTIVE

ASSIMILATING KNOWLEDGE AND STORIES FROM OUR FANDOM'S FINEST COSTUMERS.

Enchanted by Chapel

"I was first introduced to *Star Trek* by my friend with nightly sessions laughing over the original series," reflects Emily. "I absolutely adore the uniform dresses – specifically Christine's – just match some go–go boots with them and your 1960s fashion dreams are complete."

Of course, as would be the case with most intrepid fans, Emily didn't want to just admire Christine Chapel's attire, she wanted to try her hand at cosplaying it!

"With a love of sewing, too much time on my hands, and a pattern from the *Star Fleet Technical Manual*, I went to work putting it all together. In the show, Christine really pops out to me as a lovable character. Her kind voice keeps her centered," says Emily. "I see her as a mother of the *U.S.S. Enterprise*, one to keep the crew moving with tenderness and determination." The cosplayer also inherited Chapel's affinity for a certain Vulcan science officer. "I definitely attribute my love of Spock to her!"

Victory is Life

Hailing from Dresden in Germany, Thomas-Felix Sailer can often be found portraying a character from a more distant region of the galaxy: a Jem'Hadar soldier! A *Star Trek* fan since 1992, the cosplayer chose the fearsome alien because *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* is their favorite series. The costume has been impressing other fans for over a decade, as Thomas-Felix travels to conventions throughout Germany and the Czech Republic.

However, this Jem'Hadar doesn't travel with a Vorta or a Founder. Thomas-Felix is often accompanied by Sandra, who enjoys cosplaying as a Bajoran militia officer. Additionally, Thomas-Felix adores roleplaying with other fans and cosplayers who they meet at the conventions they attend.

QUANTUM ARCHIVES

CHRONICLING THE CREATIVITY OF STAR TREK FANS THROUGH ART, CRAFTS, AND MORE!

A Voyage of Discovery

Inspired by *Star Trek: Voyager*'s series finale, fan artist Jonny Saiz opted to express his vision through a painting which depicts *Voyager* traveling through the "Endgame" nebula and going past the Borg cubes to make it home. "I painted the lettering to make them more than just a title," shares Jonny. "I wanted the letters to also be a part of the story. That is why I painted them as Borg cubes."

Jonny also enjoys watching *Star Trek: Discovery*, and a special moment in the show's third season caught his attention. "I was thrilled at the first mention of "Let's Fly" by Captain Michael Burnham," beams the artist. "I love the bright, sparkly positivity that comes from *Discovery*. It gives me a lot of hope. I had to celebrate that and put it into a diorama/painting."

Live-Action *Star Trek: Lower Decks*

For most fans, *Star Trek: Lower Decks* is far more than an animated adventure, particularly as its characters continue to experience personal growth with every season. "I've always loved art that imagines how cartoon characters would look in live action," explains fan artist Clover Laguz, "and *Lower Decks* was perfect for me to try that myself. Especially with the newer episodes feeling more and more like live action *Star Trek* stories."

Clover took their passion for the series and infused it into their art, portraying Bradward Boimler and D'Vana Tendi as their very own live-action counterparts. However, in Clover's view, this wasn't just a fun exercise to complete, it helped tie the series to the entire *Star Trek* galaxy. "Drawing *Lower Decks* as live action is a reminder that our animated *Star Trek* exists in the same universe."

SUBSPACE LINKS

ESTABLISHING CONNECTIONS AND FRIENDSHIPS VIA A SHARED LOVE FOR STAR TREK.

An Original Fan

With over 57 years of history to its name, *Star Trek* has had fans who've discovered the franchise at various points throughout the over 800 episodes and feature films that have been produced.

"I am an original fan who started watching *Star Trek* as an 11–year old in 1966," recalls Fran Taylor. The experience was very special for Fran. "I looked up and saw Nichelle Nichols on the screen. She was a Black woman not in a subservient role on TV in 1966! I was in awe and hooked."

Fran has also established numerous *Star Trek* connections over the years. "My cherished friendships are many, however the ones that stand out are my fellow SyFy Sistas: Subrina Wood, Tamia Harper, and Yvette Blackmon Tom."

Fran counts The Original Series episode "Journey to Babel" and *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*'s "In the Pale Moonlight" as two of her favorite *Star Trek* installments. Fran recently took a trip to New York City with fellow fans, to see a screening of *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* aboard the *U.S.S. Intrepid*.

SECTOR 001

LEARNING ABOUT FANS' 'FIRST CONTACT' WITH STAR TREK.

"*Star Trek* is a very important and crucial part of my life, without it I don't know where or what I would be," shares Miguel Sandoval. "So I was first introduced to *Star Trek*: *The Next Generation* in the early 1990s by my older brother. He purchased a VHS cassette of "Encounter At Farpoint." Sadly, Miguel's brother passed away in 1995 due to an accident. "This is why the franchise has always remained very special to me," adds the fan.

Cosplaying is another facet of *Star Trek* fandom that is important to Miguel. "I really didn't start to cosplay [until] around 2017, and my goal has always been to be as close to screen accurate as I can be. This was also very expensive so I really couldn't do it until I was able to get a really good paying job," laughs Miguel. "When I put on the uniform, I want [to] represent the best of what humanity has to offer. I feel proud and I always try to wear them as often as I can!"

THE COLLECTORS GUILD

LISA HERRERA EXPLORES RARE *STAR TREK* MERCHANDISE AND RELICS...

I have a vintage photo from a 1968 science fiction convention in California, where the Gene Roddenberry Appreciation Society of *Star Trek* fans gathered to honor the man himself. A hand-made sign in the room they were to meet him declared: "What do *Star Trek* Fans Do? They collect things."

WORDS: LISA HERRERA AKA 1TREKFAN

STAR TREK: DOME LUNCH BOX AND THERMOS
Manufacturer: **Aladdin Industries** | Year: **1968**

STAR TREK: HANGING LAMP
Manufacturer: **Prestigeline Inc.** | Year: **1960s**

There are a few "Holy Grails" of early *Star Trek* collectibles. I don't own them all – yet. But I do have two of the best: the 1968 dome lunch box and thermos by Aladdin Industries and the Prestigeline Inc. hanging lamp from sometime in the late 1960s. The dome lunch box and thermos are beautifully illustrated on all sides and is an amazing showpiece that rarely shows up without rust and scratches. The thermos alone with the stopper and cup can sell for hundreds of dollars. I don't quite remember how much I paid for my set. It was a lot, but certainly not US$3750 like the one from the estate of Greg Jein recently sold for!

As for the groovy *Star Trek* hanging lamp, I have never been able to find out more about it other than it was made by Prestigeline Inc. in New York in the late 1960s, and popular lore has it that only 500 were made. I feel like someone must know more, or there must be at least an old advertisement somewhere that could validate some of that information. I'll keep looking. Regardless, it is a rare piece and great to have illuminating a *Star Trek* room. If you want one, there is one for sale at the time of writing on a global handcraft and vintage marketplace for just over CAN$2000. A small price to be in an elite group of collectors!

STAR TREK: VINTAGE COMICS
Manufacturer: **Gold Key** | Year: **1967–1979**

Less rare and easier to add to a collection are the 61 issues of *Star Trek* Gold Key comics. Gold Key #1, worth thousands of dollars US, if professionally graded 9 or better, came out in 1967, while the last three were on store shelves in 1979. None of my Gold Keys are graded so I could not estimate the worth of the set, in currency anyway. In pleasure though, that's a different story.

These days if I want a complete set of comics, cards, action figures, or anything else, I am likely to buy the lot already assembled, to save both the shipping on individual items and the time and agony of searching for the final pieces. But I could never afford, nor ever even saw, a whole set of the Gold Keys back when I was collecting them, before the advent of online auctions. Which, actually, I'm glad about. Collecting these comics slowly gave me the chance to read and thoroughly enjoy each quirky story before it joined my collection.

I still remember issue #42, likely one of the first I read, where Spock and Scotty de-age to children! Unlike the last vintage *Star Trek* comics I acquired, the completed set of which are all still in plastic waiting for their purpose to be realized. Makes me think I should really go and enjoy those right now.

BY IBRAHEEM KAZI

WORDSEARCH

WE'VE PICKED SOME OF OUR INTREPID EDITOR'S FAVORITE MOMENTS FROM *STAR TREK*. CAN YOU FIND THEM ALL? IF YOU CAN, LIVE LONG AND PROSPER!

01. KOBAYASHI MARU
02. ENTERPRISE
03. TRIBBLES
04. BORG
05. GRUDGE
06. VULCAN
07. CAPTAIN
08. KIRK
09. MORN
10. SARU
11. DATA

J	M	G	B	G	L	K	T	P	F	K	T	G	N	L	P	K	K	R	A	Q	C	Q	S	S
M	Y	J	V	O	Z	A	B	E	G	H	V	I	M	T	K	N	N	G	H	U	G	K	L	M
V	G	S	N	H	R	W	S	N	C	J	K	I	I	X	J	V	N	G	J	Q	F	T	C	X
N	F	M	E	H	M	G	K	T	H	K	B	K	C	M	P	S	W	D	Y	A	M	D	Z	B
B	B	N	V	Z	F	R	V	E	D	A	T	L	S	F	X	U	T	C	M	F	N	O	D	G
E	V	N	D	M	O	K	N	R	K	W	B	U	A	R	N	S	P	S	N	G	J	V	C	D
C	S	F	B	K	R	K	N	P	G	V	O	K	I	G	J	A	C	F	K	A	F	M	H	H
J	Q	N	T	T	Y	Y	F	R	R	R	N	H	N	M	O	R	N	N	R	B	C	L	G	P
O	V	T	D	H	S	C	O	I	S	N	M	V	S	D	W	U	N	S	Z	N	B	D	R	X
K	R	C	V	B	L	S	N	S	O	R	K	S	X	P	D	N	J	L	W	E	C	E	U	S
G	N	E	Y	M	D	H	K	E	Q	C	L	G	S	N	E	C	L	C	P	K	B	F	D	N
D	C	B	L	B	N	R	P	B	L	N	V	O	M	O	D	R	N	D	K	O	Y	I	G	Y
A	M	H	V	A	Y	W	X	C	B	F	W	H	D	N	B	H	P	S	H	J	K	A	E	Y
L	K	O	B	A	Y	A	S	H	I	M	A	R	U	G	V	L	P	R	Y	L	Q	N	A	E
A	D	A	N	V	Z	T	B	S	B	E	X	N	J	J	Q	W	P	M	H	T	R	T	B	N
A	T	Q	T	C	T	K	W	N	V	D	B	N	M	V	M	K	D	R	B	R	Z	X	F	D
H	V	T	Y	T	H	S	N	I	T	V	T	I	E	A	B	V	F	S	G	R	D	B	J	X
V	G	R	R	G	F	B	M	L	W	S	H	A	W	D	A	T	A	R	B	I	S	T	A	F
M	C	I	I	I	O	D	P	X	Q	P	K	F	E	L	X	Z	J	U	I	Y	T	F	P	N
B	H	K	N	N	B	O	R	G	H	H	U	F	N	S	E	V	H	X	D	J	M	Z	U	V
N	Y	H	I	A	B	B	M	G	O	B	L	G	N	R	K	N	V	U	L	C	A	N	Q	A
S	M	J	S	A	H	S	L	W	Q	T	G	H	L	C	J	R	T	G	N	A	J	H	P	Z
G	P	L	B	R	D	B	C	E	N	R	J	G	V	J	Y	O	L	H	L	P	N	G	W	V
J	C	O	V	D	S	C	L	D	S	T	O	R	F	D	R	M	B	G	V	T	C	E	C	R
R	S	H	Q	M	B	Z	D	G	W	M	E	G	E	C	S	K	F	K	Z	A	K	X	E	C
T	V	A	S	C	G	Y	C	V	R	G	R	N	H	C	A	B	X	B	S	I	E	H	R	B
E	Q	K	C	R	G	G	R	F	K	A	C	M	M	D	M	I	K	D	L	N	C	F	O	Y
J	F	I	Q	N	H	W	R	P	Y	S	R	D	Z	D	Y	E	A	A	D	I	G	Y	K	D
Z	M	R	A	O	G	I	N	H	Y	X	S	G	R	J	G	D	N	G	N	H	Z	W	F	X
N	R	K	I	R	K	E	G	E	S	Q	J	T	E	Z	T	E	C	S	F	O	F	F	R	H

1-7: Back to training, Cadet.

8-16: Onwards and Upwards.

17-23: A bold new world awaits us!

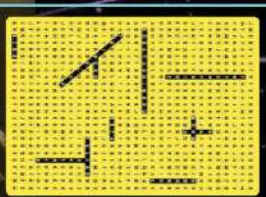
To Boldly Quote

- "What Chief Vanderberg said about the [horted] is exactly what the mother [horted] said to me. She found [humanoid] appearance revolting... but she thought she could get used to it."

"Really Captain, my [modesty]..."

"By golly, Jim, I'm beginning to think I can [cure] a [rainy] day."

Wordsearch



Spock the Difference

SPOCK THE DIFFERENCE

(X6 DIFFERENCES)

WE'RE IN NEED OF SOME COLOR CORRECTION BEFORE WE BOLDLY GO WHERE NO ONE HAS GONE BEFORE, HELP US FIND THE SIX MISTAKES ON THIS PICTURE.

TO BOLDLY QUOTE

DO YOU COPY? OUR SENSORY FUNCTIONS HAVE OVERLOADED, WE CAN'T SEE THE REST OF THESE SENTENCES. RESTORE THEM TO THEIR ORIGINAL FORM BEFORE WE TAKE OFF!

"WHAT CHIEF VANDERBERG SAID ABOUT THE _____ IS EXACTLY WHAT THE MOTHER _____ SAID TO ME. SHE FOUND _____ APPEARANCE REVOLTING... BUT SHE THOUGHT SHE COULD GET USED TO IT."

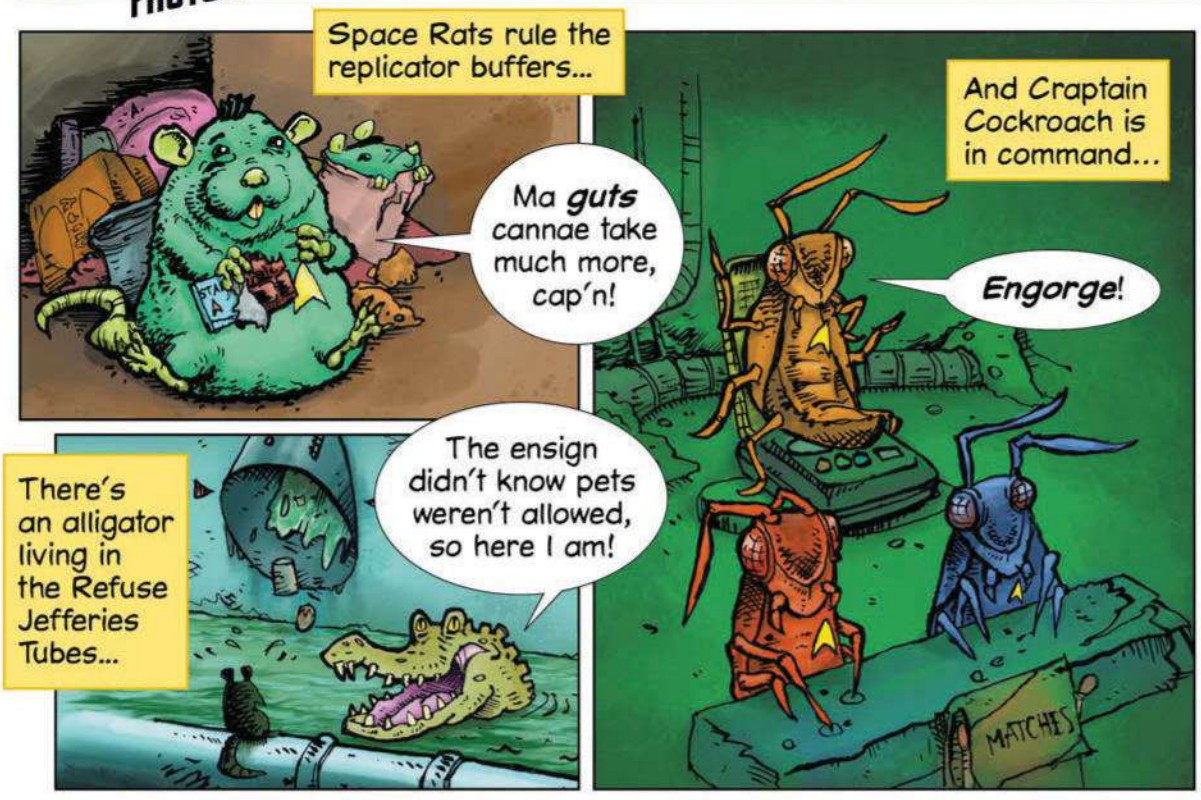
"REALLY CAPTAIN, MY _____..."

"BY GOLLY, JIM, I'M BEGINNING TO THINK I CAN _____ A _____ DAY."

THE WARPED FACTOR

. *Below the Lowest Decks!*
• (or Beneath a Starship's Deckplates: The Untold Story)

by Coop


Space Rats rule the replicator buffers...
Ma guts cannae take much more, cap'n!
And Craptain Cockroach is in command...
Engorge!
There's an alligator living in the Refuse Jefferies Tubes...
The ensign didn't know pets weren't allowed, so here I am!
MATCHES

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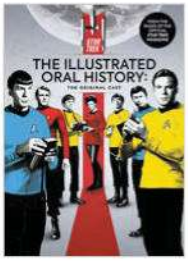
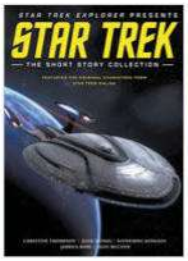
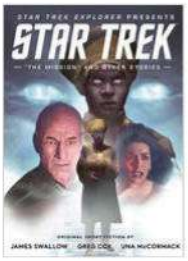


Star Trek: **The Illustrated Oral History: The Original Cast**



Star Trek Explorer **Presents: The Short Story Collection**

Star Trek Explorer **Presents: 'Q and False' and Other Stories**

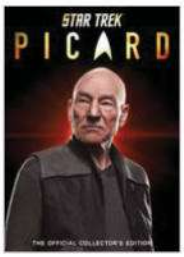


Star Trek Explorer **Presents: 'The Mission' and Other Stories**

Star Trek Explorer **Presents: A Year to the Day I Saw Myself Die and Other Stories**

Star Trek: ***The Genesis Trilogy***

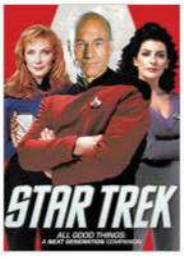
Star Trek **Villains**



Star Trek: Picard

Star Trek: **Fifty Years of *Star Trek***

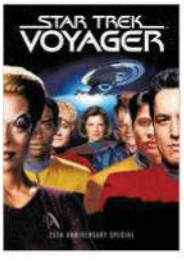
Star Trek: **Epic Episodes**



Star Trek: **All Good Things**

Star Trek: **The Movies**

Star Trek Discovery: **Guide To Season 1 & 2**



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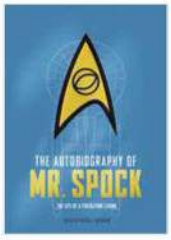

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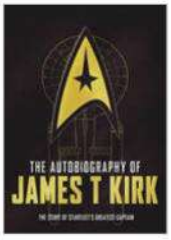

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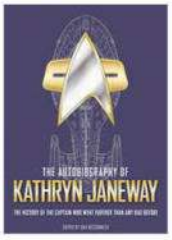

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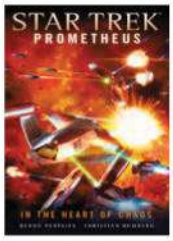
The Autobiography of Jean-Luc Picard



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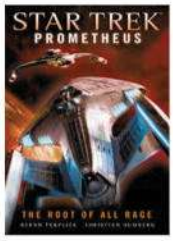

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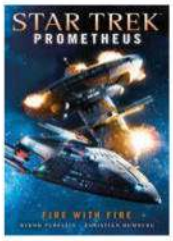

Star Trek Prometheus: **Fire With Fire**

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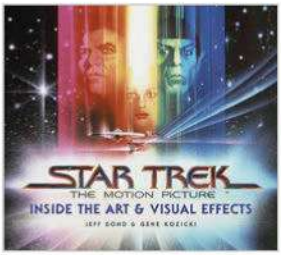

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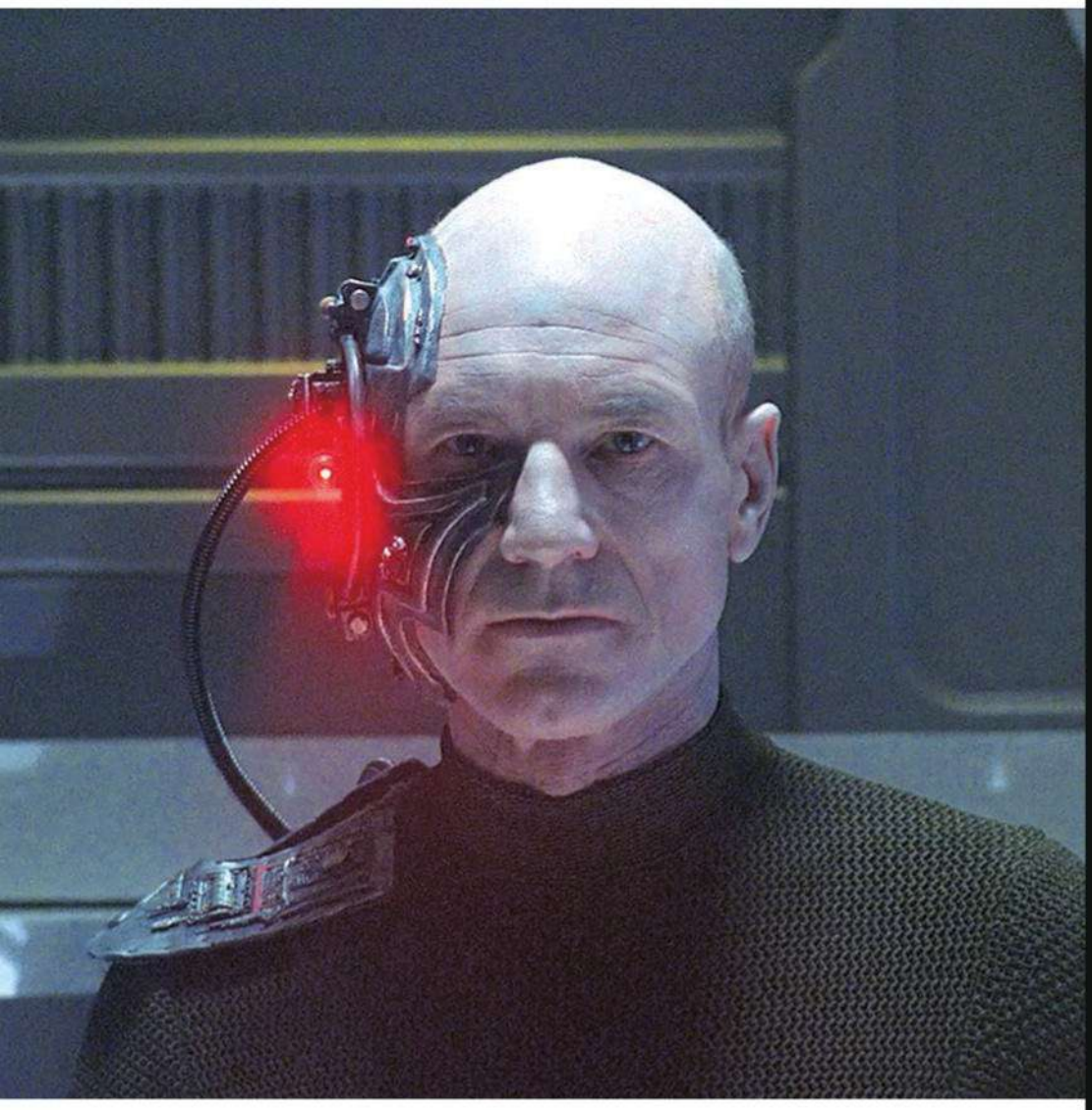
STAR TREK EXPLORER

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

DIGITAL SUPPLEMENT

Captain's Log



This special subscriber supplement of *Star Trek Explorer* brings you two all-new *Star Trek* stories, and two "behind the scenes" interviews from the magazine archives, remastered by our talented designer, Dan Bura. **Cliff Bole** was one of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*'s finest directors, and Larry Nemecek's interview offers insights into his fondly remembered work. Writer and story editor **DC Fontana**'s contribution *Star Trek* mythos in general, still helping shape the saga today, is always worthy of revisiting.

"**Memoriam**" by **David Mack**, illustrated by **Louie de Martinis**, is a poignant tale, set in the *Star Trek* "movie era" touching on the aftermath of events in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*, and Captain Kirk's attempts to deal with the death of a son he hardly knew. "**The Simulation**" by Adeena Mignogna, a new writer for the magazine, but no stranger to science fiction, explores the background to one of the most critically-acclaimed *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episodes, "The Inner Light". **Luca Strati**'s opening art for this story perfectly complements the tale.

Engage!

John Freeman
Editor

STAR TREK™ EXPLORER
THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

EDITORIAL
Editor: John Freeman
Designer: Dan Bura
Group Editor: Jake Devine
Art Director: Oz Browne

CONTRIBUTORS
FEATURES: Lou Anders, Chris Dows, Rich Handley, Lisa Herrera, John Kirk, Kurt Anthony Krug, Dan Leckie, Rich Matthews, Larry Nemecek, Jay Stobie,
FICTION: Greg Cox, Keith R. A Decandido, David Mack, Adeena Mignogna
ARTISTS: Mike Collins, Christopher Cooper, Louie de Martinis, Nick Miller, Luca Strati, Pete Wallbank

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US Newsstand Distribution: Curtis Circulation Company
US Bookstore Distribution: The News Group
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STAR TREK EXPLORER MAGAZINE
ISSUE #12. Published by Titan Magazines, a division of Titan Publishing Group Limited, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP.

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Printed in the US by Quad/Graphics. ISSN 1357-3888 TMN 14314

MEMORIAM

EXCLUSIVE FICTION

Memoriam

STORY: DAVID MACK
ART: LOUIE DE MARTINI

2287

We walk together, the three of us, indivisible as we stride toward an armored security portal at the far end of a narrow corridor. Invisible sensors scan the envelope in my hand for dangerous substances; unseen eyes search our microexpressions for malicious intent. The walls look featureless, but they conceal weapons that could vaporize us in a flash, if the word were given.

At the end of the passage, the security door opens to reveal an operations center staffed by Starfleet officers and civilian scientists of various species – and, directly in front of me, a squad of Starfleet security officers in tactical armor. Each one holds a phaser rifle braced against their shoulder and aimed at my face. I halt in the open doorway and my companions stop close behind me, like guardian angels at my shoulders.

From behind the riflemen, Admiral Azita steps forward. Like most Caraphites, she is tall and slender, with narrow, gangly limbs and delicate extremities. Her neck is long and sinewy, supporting a relatively small head with enormous eyes. When she sees me, her slit of mouth tightens into a frown. "That's far enough, Kirk."

I meet her unblinking gaze with my own. "Admiral Azita. Please let us pass."

She looms over me. "I have orders from Starfleet that say no one can go out there."

"I have a letter from the president that says we can."

I hand her my envelope. She accepts it. Pulls out the letter. Scowls at the presidential seal, and again at the signature. As she hands it back, there's resentment in her voice. "Very well, Captain. You may proceed." She gestures past me, at Captain Spock and Doctor Leonard "Bones" McCoy. "But not them."

Her remark lights the fuse on Bones's temper. "Excuse *me*, Admiral, but if it weren't for *us*, your lab wouldn't even *be* here."

The admiral straightens her posture and projects indignation. "Thank you, Doctor McCoy, but I'm well aware of what happened the *last* time you three were on this planet."

I can't let this argument waste valuable time; I step between McCoy and Azita. "I *am* going out there, Admiral – and I need my friends with me."

Azita strikes a thoughtful pose. I can tell she feels cornered. She doesn't want to lose face by backing down, but she doesn't want to compound her embarrassment by forcing the issue.

Her shoulders slump, signaling her surrender. "Observation only. And no modern technology past this point."

"We know the rules."

"Indeed," Spock adds, with trademark Vulcan dryness. "We *wrote* them."

We hand over our communicators, and the security officers escort us to another passageway on the far side of ops. We stride down that long, dim corridor to another massive security door, this one labeled with red words of caution:

WARNING: TEMPORAL RADIATION
PROCEED AT YOUR OWN RISK
AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY

The senior security officer keys a code into a touchscreen beside the door, and then she leans in for a retinal scan. The massive portal opens and swings outward.

One step outside and I'm struck by the eerie ambience of this world. Unearthly moans fill the air, like the keening of ghosts. Spock and McCoy follow me out, and then the ponderous door closes behind us.

We walk in silence through the ruins of a civilization lost to antiquity, a world a billion years dead. Loneliness hangs over this place like a shroud. Stone columns,

"GUARDIAN: SHOW ME THE LIFE OF DOCTOR DAVID MARCUS… SHOW ME THE LIFE OF MY SON."

toppled and broken, dot the lone and level sands beneath a bruised violet sky. Several dozen meters from the vault-like door of the Gateway research facility, we stop and regard this world's last surviving artifact:

The Guardian of Forever.

It's just as I remember it. An oblate ring of rough-hewn bedrock standing on its edge, mist falling like a curtain inside its broad, irregular opening, without any evident source. The sight of it conjures emotions I've fought to bury and struggled to deny: grief; rage; resentment. All of them as raw now as they ever were. Their sudden return compels me to confess, "I swore I'd never come back here."

Spock replies, "If you don't wish to continue – "

"No, Spock. This pain... I need to put it to rest." I step almost close enough to touch the eternal, sentient time portal. "Guardian? Do you remember us?"

Within the stony ring, pockets of light pulse in cadence with the Guardian's booming, resonant voice. "I remember *all* who have passed my threshold, James Tiberius Kirk."

I inch closer to the Guardian until McCoy clasps my shoulder. "Jim. You don't have to do this."

Tears sting my eyes. "Yes, I do, Bones." My voice breaks as I make my request. "Guardian: Show me the life of Doctor David Marcus… Show me the life of my son."

The mist falling inside the Guardian's center thickens. Its voice shakes the ground beneath our feet. "David's life comprises 8,814 days, sixteen hours, nine minutes, and eleven seconds, as you measure the passage of time. Do you wish to view its full duration in real time?"

I consider what I've missed of David's life, and what I most yearn to see.

"Show me his birth."

The Guardian's mist dissipates to reveal a parade of moments. Gazing into its montage, I peer back in time to March 2261, to a large, well-equipped delivery room inside a Starfleet-run hospital. Doctor Carol Marcus is in labor, her blond hair matted with sweat, her face contorted in agony. She screams, and it's the worst sound I've ever heard, guttural and primal. Her rage melts into sorrow, and she weeps as she begs the ob-gyn, "Just cut him out!"

"We're too far along for that, Carol."

The nurse interrupts, "She's bleeding faster, Doctor."

The ob-gyn remains confident. "She'll make it. C'mon, Carol, one more!"

Carol draws a breath. Pushes so hard I'm afraid she'll explode. Then she exhales in a gust, and a baby's shrieking cry splits the air. Carol sobs with relief,

and I shed tears of joy as the nurse cleans up my newborn son and hands him to Carol. "Have you picked a name yet?"

Carol nods. "David."

The doctor holds Carol's hand. "Is the father here?"

The smile fades from Carol's face. "No. He isn't."

My tears turn bitter as the moment fades. "She never told me she was pregnant." All at once, years of sorrow weigh heavily upon me. "By the time I knew I was a father, she'd already decided I wasn't fit for the job."

The Guardian pulses with curiosity. "Do you wish to see more?"

"His first words. What did he say?"

Beyond the veil of mist, a room materializes. A nursery. Carol carries the infant David toward a crib. She sets him gently on his back and tucks a tiny plush rabbit under his arm. "Good night, my beautiful boy."

David coos softly as Carol switches on a holographic mobile of assorted shapes, which turn and shift colors and sizes above his crib. She says softly, "Lights, five percent." The room dims. As Carol turns to leave, David reaches toward her –

"Ma-ma!"

I'm so overwhelmed by the simple beauty of this moment that I can barely breathe as Carol turns back toward David with tears in her eyes. She leans down and kisses the top of his head, and as if by some miracle, she and I utter the same words, worlds and decades apart:

"My beautiful boy..."

McCoy's hand is back on my shoulder. "Maybe that's enough for now."

I ignore Bones's well-intended counsel. "Show me his first steps."

The nursery washes away like a Tibetan sand painting, replaced by an afternoon in Carol's research laboratory. David, now a toddler, caroms through canyons of steel cabinets and work tables that are all taller than he is. He holds one countertop's edge to help himself stand steady. Just a few meters away, across an open stretch of floor, Carol sits at a workstation and stares into the hooded display of a quantum microscope.

Mustering all his courage, David lets go of the counter and staggers toward Carol. He remains upright for just a few clumsy steps, a teetering stumble, before falling back on his knees. He looks up, excited by his achievement, seeking his mother's praise – but her eyes remain fixed on the microscope's display. She has no idea what's just happened.

Seeing the sorrow on my son's face, my heart feels like a glasswork struck by a hammer. All I want to do is scoop him up in my arms, tell him I saw his big moment, and let him know how damned proud of him I am... but I never can. That day came and went decades ago. And I missed it as much as Carol did.

"Guardian: His first day of school."

A sprawling lawn of blue-green grass surrounds a modern-looking building. Parents shepherd children toward its main entrance as Carol and six-year-old David approach a genial, middle-aged Asian man in a tailored suit. Carol calls out, "Principal Wang?"

The tall, trim man turns and flashes a broad smile. "Doctor Marcus!" He bends down to greet my son. "And this must be–?"

"David," my boy declares, beaming beneath his head of curly golden hair.

"Of course. Welcome, David!"

Carol hands Wang a yellow data card, which he plugs into his reader. He scrolls through a few screens of information and nods. "Very good. This all looks –" He does a double-take, first at David, then at Carol. "His father is James T. Kirk?"

She shoos David toward the school's entrance. "Go on, sweetheart. Follow the others!" She waves as David sprints toward the other kids. "Have a good first day! Love you!"

He looks back just long enough to reply, "Love you, too!"

Wang waits until David is out of earshot. Then he asks Carol with the energy of the starstruck, "Kirk the famous starship captain?"

"Yes, but please keep it quiet. I don't want his teachers or classmates to know."

"Of course. My apologies, Doctor."

I wince as I flash back to two years ago, when Carol and I last reprised our decades-long argument about her cutting me out of David's life. "You had your world, and I had mine," she had said without pity or regret. "And I wanted him in *mine*."

"I MISSED MY SON'S ENTIRE LIFE, SPOCK. AND JUST WEEKS AFTER HE CAME BACK INTO MINE, HE WAS GONE. I NEVER HAD THE CHANCE TO KNOW HIM."

Spock leans toward me, his tone sympathetic. "Jim. Is this really necessary?"

"I missed my son's entire life, Spock. And just weeks after he came back into mine, he was gone. I never had the chance to know him." I regard the cold monolith to which I've turned for comfort. "This is all that's left to me, now."

Hours pass as the Guardian shows me moment after moment, some tiny and intimate, others the milestones of David's young and tragically short life. My boy's first kiss. His high-school graduation. His first great breakthrough as a scientist. His first day at work in Carol's laboratory on the Regula I research station. Then I ask the Guardian to show me David's greatest regret, and I'm unsurprised to learn it was the detonation of the Genesis Device. But when I ask to see a moment David was proud of, and the Guardian shows me the last time I ever saw my boy, when David said he was proud to be my son…

It takes me awhile to dry my eyes and recover my composure.

Spock and McCoy give me my space and let me take my time.

They've been more than patient with me. But it's time to face the music.

I approach the Guardian, my mien resolute. "Guardian... show me how my son died."

Spock steps up beside me. His voice is firm: "Guardian, stop."

McCoy pivots in front of me from the other side. "Why, Jim? You *know* how he died."

"I *heard* it, Bones. I never *saw* it."

Spock remains dubious. "Does that really matter?"

"It matters to *me*, Spock. It was my son's bravest moment. I owe it to him to bear witness. To remember." Gently, but without compromise, I ease my friends aside. "Guardian... show me."

The tableau takes shape like a bad dream.

The quake-riven, storm-tossed Genesis Planet tears itself apart around a band of Klingon soldiers, who hold hostage three Federation prisoners kneeling in a line: at one end, the young, feral, regenerated body of Spock; at the other end, his former female Vulcan protégé and now his protector, Lieutenant Saavik; and, between them, Doctor David Marcus.

A lone Klingon soldier paces behind them, his *d'k tahg* drawn. He has been ordered by Kruge, his commander, to kill one of the prisoners. Which one is up to him.

The Klingon's movements are deliberate. Controlled.

My stomach churns with dread.

The feral Spock doesn't understand what's happening. Saavik does, but she's too much of a Vulcan to let her feelings betray her. But David, my boy... I see the fear in his eyes.

The soldier stops behind David. He pivots toward Saavik as he opens his weapon's crossguard. Raises his blade to strike –

David lunges at him. It's an act of impulse, a moment of bravado.

I can't breathe, and tears fall from my eyes as I watch, knowing how it will end.

David and the Klingon roll across the ground in a wild tumble.

Instinct kicks in and I reach for my phaser – but my hand finds nothing there.

Spock and McCoy see me grasp for a weapon I don't have.

The Klingon grapples with David. My boy tries to fight back, but the brute is too big. He overpowers David with ease. Slams him to the ground. Raises his knife.

I lunge toward the Guardian – and two sets of hands seize my arms and hold me fast, on my side of the temporal gateway.

On the other side, the Klingon's blade plunges into my son's chest.

My beautiful boy.

Spock commands the Guardian, "Enough."

The scene melts away.

Trapped in my friends' dual embrace, I sink to the ground as if the Klingon's blade had just gutted *me*. I rend the silence with ragged cries like the howls of a mortally wounded beast.

My soul has been torn out. Again.

Minutes pass while I struggle for composure. My friends, bless them both, grant me the time I need.

I stand. Dust myself off. Look back at my friends with tear-reddened eyes. "Thank you. Both of you. If you hadn't been here –"

"We know, Jim," Spock says with an empathy born of wisdom. "We know."

McCoy drapes his arm over my shoulders. "Let's go home."

I let them lead the way back to the facility's security door.

Before I follow, I permit myself a final look back at the Guardian's misty portal.

Good-bye, David.

D. C. FONTANA:

THREE DECADES OF WRITING

DC Fontana's credits to *Star Trek* cannot be understated, both as a writer of great stories and as a trailblazer for other women. Back in 1996, Lou Anders chatted with renowned writer for *Star Trek Magazine*, then a *Star Trek* veteran for over 30 years...

WORDS: LOU ANDERS

This interview was first published in *Star Trek Magazine* #29

Any account of the original series of *Star Trek* that endeavors to be accurate must place a large part of the credit for *Star Trek*'s success on D. C. Fontana's shoulders.

In fact, Fontana, who was heavily involved in *Star Trek*: The Original Series, wrote for every *Star Trek* series, except the latest. "At first, I working for Gene Roddenberry's associate producer, when Gene's secretary was taken ill with some major surgery and she was out for three or four months," recalls Fontana. "I just moved up and worked for Gene. So I got to know Gene better than just being on the staff – I was actually actively working for him, and he knew I had written scripts, and they had gotten on the air before. I had nine credits before I ever started working on *Star Trek*, and Gene encouraged me – he was one of those good people who encourage young writers and try to help them. On *Star Trek*, obviously, I was there from the very first. He asked me to continue as his secretary and it took two years to get the show on the air. In 1964 we made the first pilot. In 1965 we made the second pilot. We did the series in 1966."

Midway through the 1966 season, Roddenberry had become such a strong supporter of D. C. Fontana that he backed her to be his story editor. Although her stunning work certainly contributed to the series' success, she herself praises *Star Trek*'s line-up. "It's the fact that the original actors were so good together," she says modestly. "As writers, we could give them stories to tell, but if that chemistry had not been there, we would not have responded to it as well. It was partly the characters the actors were playing and partly what they brought to those characters as actors. If anybody else had been cast, it might not have been the same. At one point, Jack Lord was considered for the role of *Captain Kirk* – thank god that didn't happen, because Bill Shatner was just right, and of course, Leonard was always *Mr Spock*. No question about it."

02

03

04

"ON ANY SERIES, YOU KNOW WHAT THE CHARACTERS ARE AND WHAT'S REQUIRED OF YOU FOR THEM, SO YOU TRY TO FIND STORIES FOR THEM."

After the glory days of the first two seasons, Fontana's involvement began to die down. "During the third season," she explains, "I opted not to be on the staff, because I wanted to freelance some more, and Gene was moving anyway because of the situation with NBC. They were insisting on putting the show out at 10.00pm on a Friday night, which was a deadly time slot at the time. Gene didn't want to spend a lot of his life putting work into what had to be a failure, because you couldn't get ratings in that time slot. So, he left in the third season and so did I, but we maintained a fairly personal relationship throughout the years."

In fact, the pair would team up again to work on *Star Trek: The Animated Series*, on which Fontana served as associate producer for the first year. "Nobody remembers that, do they?" she says. "It is available now on video and laser disc, and it's worth a look. It's a wonderful series, in case you haven't seen any – there's some good stuff there."

01 D. C. Fontana

02 *Star Trek:* The Animated Series, season 1 "Yesteryear"

03 *Star Trek:* The Original Series, season 3 "The Enterprise Incident"

04 *Star Trek:* The Original Series, season 2 "Journey to Babel"

After the animated series, Fontana and Roddenberry worked on several projects in the early Seventies. "We did *The Questor Tapes* and *Genesis II*. I was working as his personal assistant while he wrote those." When those projects ended, she and Roddenberry remained close, albeit just 'socially', until 1986. "In 1986, he called me and said, 'We've got an opportunity to do *Star Trek* again. Do you want to come?' and I said, 'Sure.' I got to write the pilot, which was *Encounter at Farpoint*."

Unfortunately, Fontana found that *Star Trek: The Next Generation* wasn't the wonderful experience for her that The Original Series had been. "Things had changed," she says. "I think Gene was ill then. I think he had suffered some small strokes. My personal opinion was that he wasn't as strong or as 'there' as he had been before. He wasn't the same man, and another influence entered into the equation, Gene's lawyer, who I think was a great influence on him. After that, Gene locked everybody else out and made them all out to be the enemy. You can't work in a situation like that, so I worked out my contract, which was the first 14 episodes, and then left and never looked back. It was a very unpleasant experience, and I don't want to go into the details, but things changed, and it wasn't as enjoyable working on *Star Trek: The Next Generation* as it had been in all the previous years. I'm sad about that, but these things happen."

In addition to her brief stint on *The Next Generation*, Fontana also wrote a script for *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* – the season one episode *"Dax"*. She talks about the peculiar requirements of a 'bottle show' such as this. "It's nice for a writer because you can use those sets for all they're worth. The same holds true for *Babylon 5*. You can have a great time, and it's not going to run into multi-millions of dollars, simply because there are standing sets. You have an ensemble cast in both situations, and you use those people. You go into their emotions, you go into their personal conflicts and their personal problems, and those are all much more character-driven stories. On an action-adventure show, obviously, you're going to try and get the characters out more. It's going to cost you more to go on location and build new sets, but you have a little more freedom to create new environments and new characters.

"My writing process is peculiar," she continues. "First of all, I don't like to wake up in the morning. It's always the hardest part of my day. The thing is it's even harder for my husband, so my feet hit the floor before his do. But the cats demand it – they sit outside the bedroom door and pound on it. So when I get up in the morning, I'm basically concerned with just getting myself alive and moving. I actually write best from 11.00 in the morning onwards. I have to get my feet under me first."

Fontana goes on to explain where her ideas come from when writing an episode for a television series. "On any series, you know what the characters are and what's required of you for them, so you try to find stories for them. You say, 'What if? What if Spock did this? What if this happened

05 *Star Trek:* The Original Series, season 1 "Tomorrow is Yesterday"

06 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 1 "Heart of Glory"

07 *Star Trek:* The Original Series, season 2 "By Any Other Name"

05

06

07

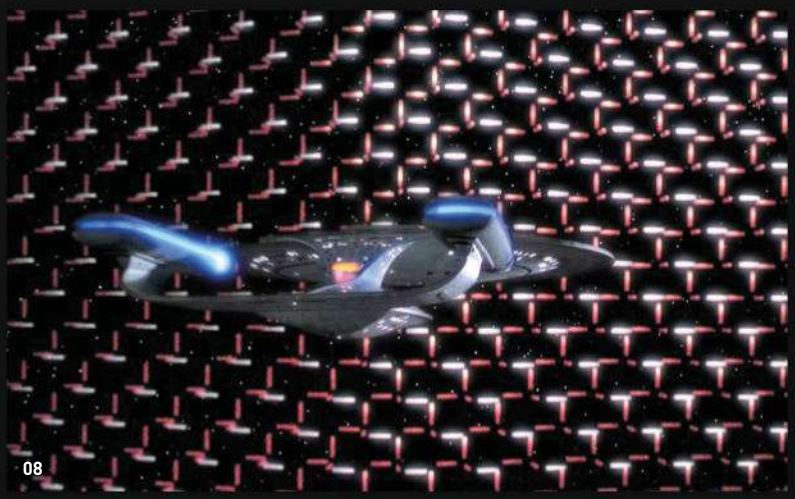
D. C. FONTANA EPISODE CREDITS

STAR TREK
Charlie X (writer)
Tomorrow is Yesterday (writer)
This Side of Paradise (writer)
Friday's Child (writer)
Journey to Babel (writer)
By Any Other Name (co-writer)
The Ultimate Computer (writer)
The Enterprise Incident (writer)
That Which Survives (story, under the pseudonym of Michael Richards)
The Way to Eden (co-wrote story, under the pseudonym of Michael Richards)

STAR TREK: THE ANIMATED SERIES
Yesteryear (writer)

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
Encounter at Farpoint (co-writer)
The Naked Now (teleplay, under pseudonym of J. Michael Bingham)
Lonely Among Us (teleplay)
Too Short a Season (co-wrote teleplay)
Heart of Glory (co-wrote story)

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE
Dax (co-wrote teleplay)



to Captain Simian [in *Captain Simian and the Space Monkeys*], or Garibaldi on *Babylon 5*?' So you ask 'what if' questions and you're looking for possibilities. Sometimes the main idea just jumps into my head, and I know it's right. Other times, I really have to work at it to try to make the pieces fit. The best stories are the ones that really jump together, while some of the ones you really have to work at are never quite as good. But largely when you think about a story, you think about the big problem first: What is the problem that [the characters] have to solve? The next question is: How do they solve it? And that really is the process for me. After that, it's all sweat. 99% perspiration and 1% inspiration!"

08 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 1 "Encounter at Farpoint"

09 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 1 "The Naked Now"

Apart from currently writing for *Babylon 5* and *Captain Simian and the Space Monkeys*, Fontana is involved in a number of other television shows, including the very popular cult television series *Xena: Warrior Princess* and Majel Barrett-Roddenberry's highly-anticipated new series, *Conquest Earth*, for which she has already written an early episode.

Although she is something of a historic personage in the universe of science fiction, Fontana's own influences are somewhat more terrestrial. "When I was a kid, I grew up on Mark Twain, Charles Dickens and Shakespeare. I read a lot and still do. I like those writers. They wrote about people. All their stories involve people in emotional situations, and that's what I write about." To Fontana, the fiction of the future really isn't that different from the writings of the past. "I like to do science fiction," she says. "I'm certainly not an expert at it, but I can do it. And what's nice about those kinds of stories is that they tell you a little something about where you've been. In other words, we're here now in 1997, and I first started writing *Star Trek* in 1966. There is a 30-year difference, but the same rules hold true. People are people. Before 1966, as well as before now, they had their loves and their hates and their jealousies and their anger and their tangled problems and having to solve difficult emotional situations. They are still going to be doing it in the future, and that's what I write about."

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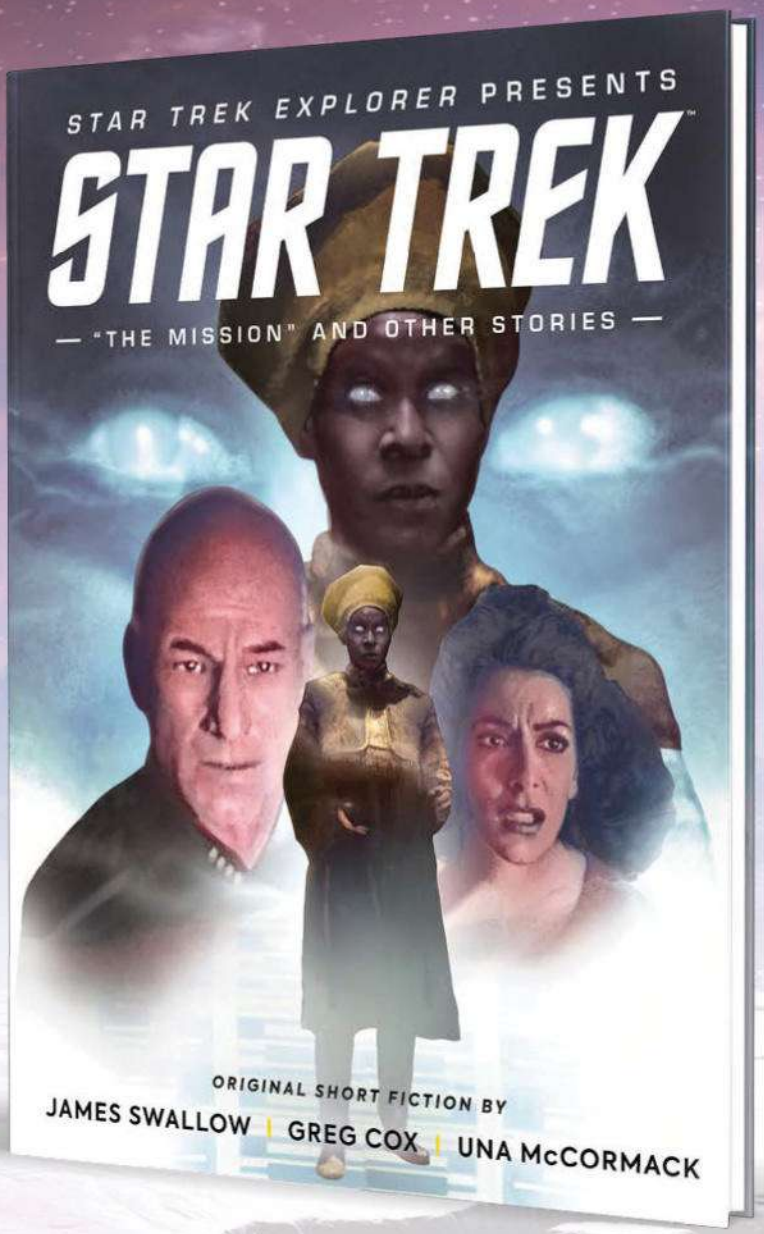
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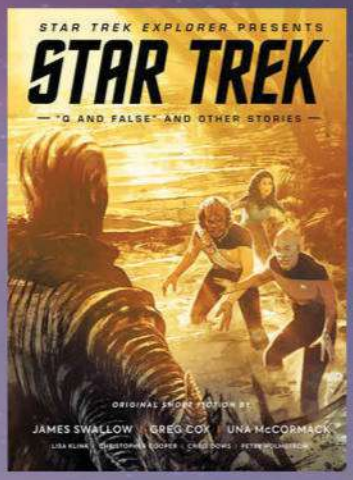

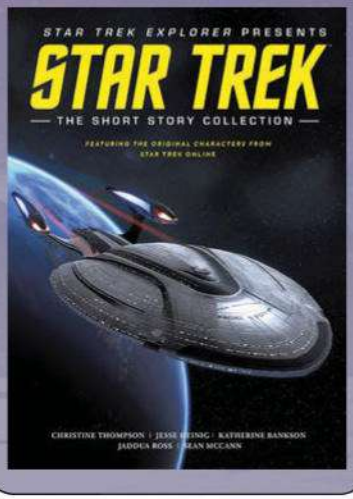

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DIRECTING *STAR TREK* CLIFF BOLE

Clifford John Bole, who died in 2014, was the director of a number of episodes of television shows such as *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *The Amazing Spider-Man*, *V: The Series*, *Baywatch*, and, of course, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, and *Star Trek: Voyager*, among others. Back in 1997, Larry Nemecek caught up with Cliff to talk to him about his work, for an interview first presented in *Star Trek Magazine* #32...

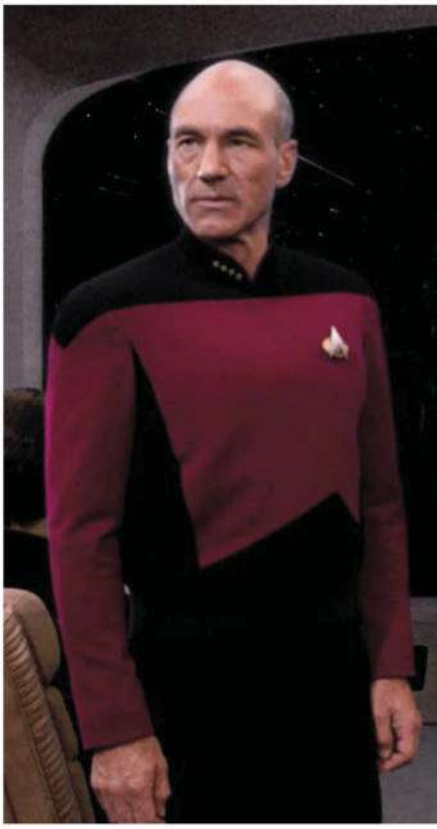
WORDS: LARRY NEMECEK

It's not everyone who has had an entire *Star Trek* race named after them. Director Cliff Bole can take that dubious distinction pointing to the bald, blue-skinned Bolians – and even go one better: helming more hours of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* than any other. His 25 of the series' 178 hours over its seven-year run is the most prolific tally, edging Les Landau's 21 and Rick Kolbe's 17. "It was one helluva ride," he proclaims, looking back over the seasons and the titles that began way back with the series' seventh show, *Lonely Among Us*.

"There were a couple I thought might be my last," he adds ruefully. "The crew works so damn hard and you try, but you just can't come to bat every time and hit a home run. You try to at least get on base, first." If Bole sounds a tad humble after 25 years in the industry, it's a reality borne of experience. Having moved to Los Angeles at the age of four, he worked his way up in 1962 from script supervisor to editor to unit manager, working films such as *Spartacus* and *The Ugly American* and then moving to television, hooking up with Aaron Spelling in the days of *Charlie's Angels*, *Vega$*, *Starsky and Hutch*, and *Fantasy Island* – and then the bionic shows, and *Baretta*, *Kojak* and *V*.

Unlike their counterparts in film, TV directors for hour-hour dramas are largely gypsies who come and go once or twice a season. On *The Next Generation* and its descendants, it could even be three – but the *auteur* still comes in for just pre-production, a six or seven-day shoot, and any post-production editing on a given episode – unlike the staff and crew, which works day in and day out, or at best in some positions alternates every other show. "I managed to survive the first year [of *The Next Generation*] – which in itself I'm proud of," he laughs. "The most dangerous thing about episodic directors – if you stay around too long, you're going to fall through some of the cracks. I don't care

01



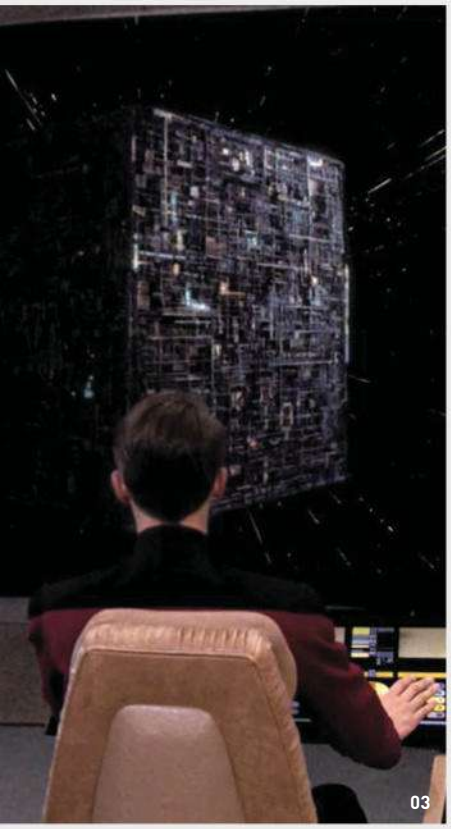
"I MANAGED TO SURVIVE THE FIRST YEAR OF *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*, WHICH IN ITSELF I'M PROUD OF."

how good the writers are, there's going to be one episode that doesn't have it all. But you're going to fall through the cracks and the chances are that they're going to say, 'Well, get rid of this bum!' It's going to happen and it's happened to me on a lot of series, and it's dangerous. The best thing to do is hit a couple of episodes and get out." But not so with *The Next Generation*, a show that was usually "just so much fun" – which he hooked up with after coming to Paramount to help get *MacGyver*'s production under control. "I had known Rick [Berman] a couple of times at Warner Brothers," he adds. "He had a good reputation in the business, and has obviously since proved it. He's probably one of the hardest-working producers I've ever worked for – I can't remember anybody quite as dedicated. That's why the project went on as long as it did, from casting it correctly: not the acting, but behind the camera." That crew put together by Berman and company went on to have such an overall stability – an anomaly in the uncertain, short-lived world of most television – that Bole notes even the "regular irregulars" like himself got caught up in the family feeling. Flight enthusiast Michael Dorn convinced him to get his own license again after a 20-year lapse in the air; special effects man Wil Thoms once towed Bole's restored 1940 pickup truck to a friend who bought it in Seattle, using a trailer loaned by one of the set grips.

"We had so much fun. We had some uptightness, but God, this was a family; we had marriages, divorces – I got divorced in the middle of it – people had kids and family. More than anything I've ever experienced, there's major family stuff going on here." As one who witnessed *The Next Generation*'s up-and-down rookie season firsthand, Bole shrugs off any notion that the in-house crew struggled out of the gate. "They were not flying by the seat of their pants – they were well organized, and they had one of the best bibles I had ever seen," he says, referring to the series' in-house continuity guide known to many a fan. "Sometimes you come into a show and you haven't got the slightest idea, and sometimes you can't get any information. But they plotted this thing out; they had a great one. The bible extended itself not just to characters but to set design, what happens at what place."

01 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 5 "Unification" part II

02 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 2 "The Royale"


03

"Those command quite a price at the conventions," he adds with a smile, "and I've got an original with director's notes on it!" Even so, despite the "well-oiled machine" of *Star Trek*'s production staff, Bole does recall how the storied turnover in writing staff in those early seasons affected his job. "Yeah, I did feel a little bit of that – you feel it in the rewrites, you feel it in the structure... but again, it's normal on any show. Sometimes it'll go as far up as the producers, and then they will clean house. There were some people changes, but when Michael Piller came in working with Rick it really took shape – although there were some good shows in the beginning. And a couple of mistakes, but we always managed to get out of 'em."

One he remembers was season one's "Conspiracy" – the story where Captain Rixx's race was named after Bole – but where no one initially caught a script note calling for Vulcan Admiral Savar to smile. "They had even written it – 'and the Vulcan smiled ...' so I let it go; it had been written and gone through a lot of hands. And it even went right past Gene [Roddenberry], God rest his soul – until, all of a sudden in the dailies [screenings] he said, 'Wait a minute!' So they were true to their original format and their audience, and we did do the reshoots. But it had just been so long since they had done all that!"

Then there was "The Royale", which suffered cutbacks in the physical scope of its sets to help budget-balancing needs of the whole season. "I did some conventions and got a lot of questions on 'The Royale', and it blew me away!" he laughs. "Some of them were so deep that they were beyond my comprehension. I'd say, 'You gotta write that one down and let me think about it!' It was way over my head. Because it was not really involved; it was a really simple story. Like they talk about Orson Welles and 'why the stairs went off into black,' it 'must have represented something very deep.' And it turns out they didn't have any money at the end for stairs! But it's great you can generate that kind of interest." Some of Bole's shows had the highest of interest – including both parts of "The Best of Both Worlds", nominally acknowledged as the best of the series. That's where being a frequent director pays off, because assignment is made by the luck of the draw, totally unrelated to the eventual story that fills that slot in the schedule.

"'The Best of Both Worlds' was the best thing I ever did on the show – and one of the best ones they ever did," he agrees. "The major thing was waiting on the Borg suits; we did it pretty much on time, but there were some gruesome hours because of that. The thing I'd like to do as a director is have actors in there, and you just can't afford it, so you just end up using

03 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 3 "The Best of Both Worlds" part I

04 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 1 "Conspiracy"

04

extras. I lucked out on this one and had some real good extras who were really into it, into the makeups – I have a feeling some of 'em went home and partied in it! – but I had some real good performances from them." The chilling cliffhanger shot of the transformed Picard that kept fans guessing throughout the summer of 1990 was not wholly his idea, he confesses. "Makeup designer Mike Westmore called me up one night and he said, 'I've got this idea for a laser' and I said 'Jesus Christ, that sounds great! Do it! Do it! Do it!' He said, 'Where do you want to put it?' And I said, 'Right here, man, on the side of the head – and every time he looks in the camera it's there.'"

Bole had another chuckle from concluding hours long, late hours as well. "I remember once I said 'OK, we're finished for the night – I don't think I need this close-up of Patrick' – and he looked up at me, we're all dead tired, and gave me one of those great English eye looks and looked down at me, from up on his pedestal in the lab. And then I said – 'Well, I guess I'll shoot a close-up of Patrick here!' "The show was also one of the first roles for guest actress Elizabeth Dennehy, who shined as Riker's rival, Lt. Cmdr. Shelby. "I remember I talked to her father (film actor Brian Dennehy) maybe two years after that," Bole recalls with a smile, " and he said, 'Oh, so you're the one who did it. I've been trying to keep her out of the business!"

05 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 5 "Unification" part II

06 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 5 "Silicon Avatar"

Bole had his turn with more of *The Next Generation*'s notable actors, of course – directing Dwight Schultz in his original outing as Reg Barclay in "Hollow Pursuits", and of course, Leonard Nimoy's historic return to television as Spock in "Reunification II". "Jesus, does he come to work – he really brings something to the party," Bole says of Schultz. "I was a little concerned with what he was doing, but I said, 'Y'know, I'm going to let you get away with it, because everybody was so straight, and he was different – and it worked! They brought him back three or four times."

"Nimoy was great," he adds. "But we only got the guy for four days – and they wanted to put him in everything they possibly could, so I had to crank!

"THERE WERE SOME PEOPLE CHANGES, BUT WHEN MICHAEL PILLER CAME IN WORKING WITH RICK, IT REALLY TOOK SHAPE."

05

06

Oh, and he wasn't going to work a lot of hours, either. So here I am saying basically you're shooting 90% of the show in four days!" By the time of the Spock show, a tie-in to the sixth and final feature that year during *Star Trek*'s 25th anniversary, he recalls, the cast and crew were only slightly awed by Nimoy's presence on the set. "Leonard's such a low-profile, low-key guy – just like the performance, since that's what Spock was. I'd worked with him years ago on *Wagon Train* when I was a script clerk, so that was a great turnaround for me. But again, he's a guy who had that down – I wasn't going to say, 'Hey, let's do a different Spock here.' Who are we kidding?"

Even so, Bole recalls offering one note about the slower speech pattern Nimoy was affecting to subtly indicate even the Vulcan's advanced age. "We had a little talk – he was trying to play it a little old, and I said, 'Naw, I don't think even these guys get that old.' We had a lot of fun on that shoot."

07 *Star Trek:* The Next Generation, season 3 "The Best of Both Worlds" part I

Some directors lean to the technical aspects of filming, while others with a theatre background may be dubbed an "actor's director" for their insightful comments on performance. After handling so many actors and crews over the years, Bole thinks he played it down the middle. "I like to get a balance in there," he says. "Of course, towards the end of the last two years, the cast had it wired and had found their space – unless they got involved in a story that turned everything upside down."

One of those he handled was "A Matter of Perspective", the Rashomon-like show with repeated alternate plots from wildly differing points of view. "That was probably the most difficult thing I'd ever directed, just to keep it straight," he laughs. "And everybody was lost, and my first assistant got sick, and all I could say was 'Folks, just hang in!'

"Jonathan Frakes and I got to where we had a line from that: I would look at him when something went wrong and say, "You're a dead man, Apgar!" – one of his lines from that show – and he'd just laugh."

Bole tends to shy away from mentioning the entries on his *The Next Generation* resume that didn't turn out so well, but with the safety of hindsight he's coaxed to point out two: "Aquiel" and "Silicon Avatar". "If I put it on my list, that's my last one!" he laughs, speaking of the latter. "The way it looks, the way it was mounted – and the Crystalline Entity looked like it should be on a Christmas tree. It was a well-done show, but just not my favorite. Jeri Taylor's a marvelous writer; she brought a tremendous amount to that group, and she brought a lot to this. I remember when I read the first draft I thought, 'uh-oh!' – but she took it over and made it work."

Overall, Bole noted how *The Next Generation* should be remembered as not only a great format for directors – "there's just nothing like this package at Paramount that I've experienced in my career," he professes – but also as the rebirth of *Star Trek*. "They were trying not just to repeat but not lose what Gene had created, and they obviously did. It didn't knock the market immediately, but it found an audience real quick. God, they accomplished a lot."

Clifford John Bole (November 9, 1937 – February 15, 2014)

STAR TREK CREDITS

Star Trek: The Next Generation
1.7 "Lonely Among Us"
1.10 "Hide And Q"
1.25 "Conspiracy "
2.12 "The Royale"
2.20 "The Emissary"
3.2 "The Ensigns of Command"
3.11 "The Hunted"
3.14 "A Matter of Perspective"
3.21 "Hollow Pursuits"
3.26 "The Best of Both Worlds"
4.1 "The Best of Both Worlds, Part II"
4.5 "Remember Me"
4.15 "First Contact"
4.20 "Qpid"
4.26 "Redemption, Part I"
5.4 "Silicon Avatar"
5.8 "Unification, Part II"
5.21 "The Perfect Mate"
6.2 "Realm Of Fear"
6.13 "Aquiel"
6.18 "Starship Mine"
6.22 "Suspicions"
7. 2 "Liaisons"
7.18 "Eye of the Beholder"
7.23 "Emergence"

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine
1.18 "Dramatis Personae"
2.5 "Cardassians"
2.24 "The Collaborator"
3.4 "Equilibrium"
3.9 "Defiant"
3.22 "Explorers"
3.25 "Facets"

Star Trek: Voyager
2.10 "Cold Fire"
2.16 "Meld"
2.19 "Lifesigns"
2.24 "Tuvix"
3.5 "False Profits"
3.9 "Future's End, Part II"
3.11 "The Q and the Grey"
5.3 "Extreme Risk"
5.14 "Bliss"
5.15 "Dark Frontier" (Part One)

EXCLUSIVE FICTION

The Simulation

STORY: ADEENA MIGNOGNA
ILLUSTRATION: LUCA STRATI

"Odette!"

Her father was calling from the makeshift bed in the living room. *Please stop calling me.*

A print-out of the voice transit message had been delivered that morning. Odette had not quite processed it yet. Actually, it was two voice-transit messages. A long one describing her most recent failure with the legacy matrix, and a shorter message from her project administrator expressing sympathy but also sadness.

"Odette!"

Odette walked into the living room.

"I'm so sorry," her father said.

Odette studied the frail man, his once-strong features now softened by illness. He was a man from a different era, one where life could be lived fully, unmarred by the knowledge of what was to come. She passed by pictures on the counter, each a frozen moment from a happier, oblivious past. They were now melancholic reminders and bittersweet testaments to a time before the dreadful certainty that their sun would soon go nova, and none of these pictures, none of these memories or histories would survive. Pictures of her with her father, with their grandparents, with her mother who had passed away from the same cancer years earlier, unaware of the greater catastrophe awaiting their world. Each image, a poignant echo of a time when the end of everything they knew wasn't looming on the horizon.

Why couldn't she have lived like her parents?

It was because of the shared burden, and everyone knew it.

"I'm so very sorry, Odette," her father said again when Odette didn't acknowledge him the first time.

"For what, father?" Odette asked, gently pulling the blanket back up to just under her father's chin. Despite the constant warmth of the room, the disease ravaging her father's body seemed to expel heat, leaving him perpetually cold. This was one of many clinical facts Odette had come to know intimately about the disease. After witnessing her mother's struggle with the same illness while she was still young and in school, her ambition had been to pursue a career in medicine. But to what end? That path was futile in the face of an impending nova that would obliterate everything. The long-term pursuit of medicine seemed

HE WAS A MAN FROM A DIFFERENT ERA, ONE WHERE LIFE COULD BE LIVED FULLY, UNMARRED BY THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT WAS TO COME.

inconsequential. Why dedicate your life to healing when the inescapable outcome was total annihilation? This stark realization had steered Odette towards her current path, one where she sought to encapsulate and preserve the essence of their culture, if not save their physical world.

"I can see it in your face, Odette," her father responded. "I heard the porter at the door. I know what message he brought you."

"That's not for you to worry about," Odette said.

"When's the launch?"

"Our missile launches in just under a year," Odette stated matter-of-factly. A year. A year was nothing. How many years had Odette lived and felt like she wasted? This was going to be her one contribution... and the message that came with her latest failure included a reminder of her obligation. She was the chosen representative of her province, entrusted with the daunting task of encapsulating their collective narrative. To distill the essence of their whole culture and experience into one summary of life and the community that surrounded it.

She had taken bits and pieces from

everyone she knew and sewn them together into an elegant narrative. Odette read widely and took pieces from all parts of Kataan and all its provinces. But the simulation failed every test. Participants lost interest within days of waking up in the new life, lasting only a few seconds of real-time. So, she tweaked it, highlighting favorite regional recipes. Again, no interest. Highlighting a popular museum of art also had no effect. Nothing compelled them to embrace their new life. And Odette had been so confident in her most recent tweak...

She had sent it off to the test program before rushing home to stay with her father after his latest surgery. This was going to be her father's last. The doctor said that there was more cancer that they couldn't get. The prognosis was that her father wouldn't live to see the missile launch.

And that was how time was measured. By the launching. Everything was before the launching, at the launching, or the unknown quantity of time they all had left after the launching.

"Let me tell you about your grandparents..." Odette's father started, after seeing her look at the pictures that sat on a series of shelves on the wall. After the bed had been set up, he'd asked for all of them to be arranged where he could see them.

"I don't have time, father. I have to get this program completed."

"What were your grandparents' names?" The dementia that accompanied the cancer was the final sign to Odette that there was nothing she could do for him. His memory came and went. He would have long periods of lucidity, and then moments where he couldn't remember names or places. He'd stopped playing his flute months ago.

Odette hesitated, her mind racing between her urgent work and her father's frail voice. "Eline and Kamin,"

she finally answered, her voice distant.

"Your grandmother Eline, she had this way of making everyone feel part of something bigger, a community, a family. And my dad... he was an iron weaver. They lived in a different time, when we were just figuring out what was happening to the planet..."

Odette's eyes drifted to an old photo on the wall, her grandparents smiling, surrounded by friends and family. A realization dawned on her. Odette's simulations lacked the warmth of shared experiences, and the depth of emotions that came with the tapestry of communal life. She had programmed fragments – meticulously engineered fragments, each a masterwork in detail – but they all lacked the context and intertwined relationships of a true community. Somehow, she needed to infuse her simulation with the depth and complexity of interconnected experiences that characterized the essence of life on Kataan.

She got up and walked over to one of the picture frames and touched it. It came to life. It was an image of her grandfather sitting on the stoop of his house, playing a flute. The same one her father used to play.

She touched the frame again and it dissolved, and a new picture appeared of her grandfather with another man.

"Who was this?" she asked, hoping that her father's moment of lucidity would last.

He looked over.

"Ah. My parents' good friend, Batai. That's who I was named for. He passed before I was born."

She turned back to her father. "Tell me more about them, please. All of them."

As her father recounted stories of Eline and Kamin, and their friends and the community of Ressik, Odette's mind began to weave these narratives into her simulation. She realized that the essence of a life well-lived wasn't in the grand events, but in the small, everyday moments shared with loved ones.

She also felt badly that she'd abandoned Ressik years ago to go work, and all she'd done was work. She passed up a life of rich experiences and communal living herself, and there was so little – possibly no – time to get any of that back.

* * *

Days turned into weeks, and Odette worked tirelessly, integrating her grandparents' stories into the simulation. She created a world where the protagonist, inspired by her grandfather Kamin, navigated life's myriad challenges with a resilience born of quiet strength. In this world, the essence of community, a reflection of her grandmother Eline's nurturing spirit, pulsed at the core of every experience, weaving a meaningful network of interconnectedness and mutual support.

The day of the final test arrived. Odette watched nervously as the new subject, a volunteer from a Southern province community she had never heard of, was immersed in the simulation. Seconds passed, then minutes. The subject remained engaged, living out a full, rich life within the simulated world.

As the test concluded, the subject awoke with tears in their eyes. "If felt so real, so vivid," they whispered, their voice a blend of awe and wistfulness. "Every moment, every emotion… it was as if I were truly living another life."

HOW MANY YEARS HAD ODETTE LIVED AND FELT LIKE SHE WASTED? THIS WAS GOING TO BE HER ONE CONTRIBUTION...

The second test subject, who had spent their childhood in the Southern province before moving north to the community Orenthia expressed similar thoughts adding, "I didn't want it to end."

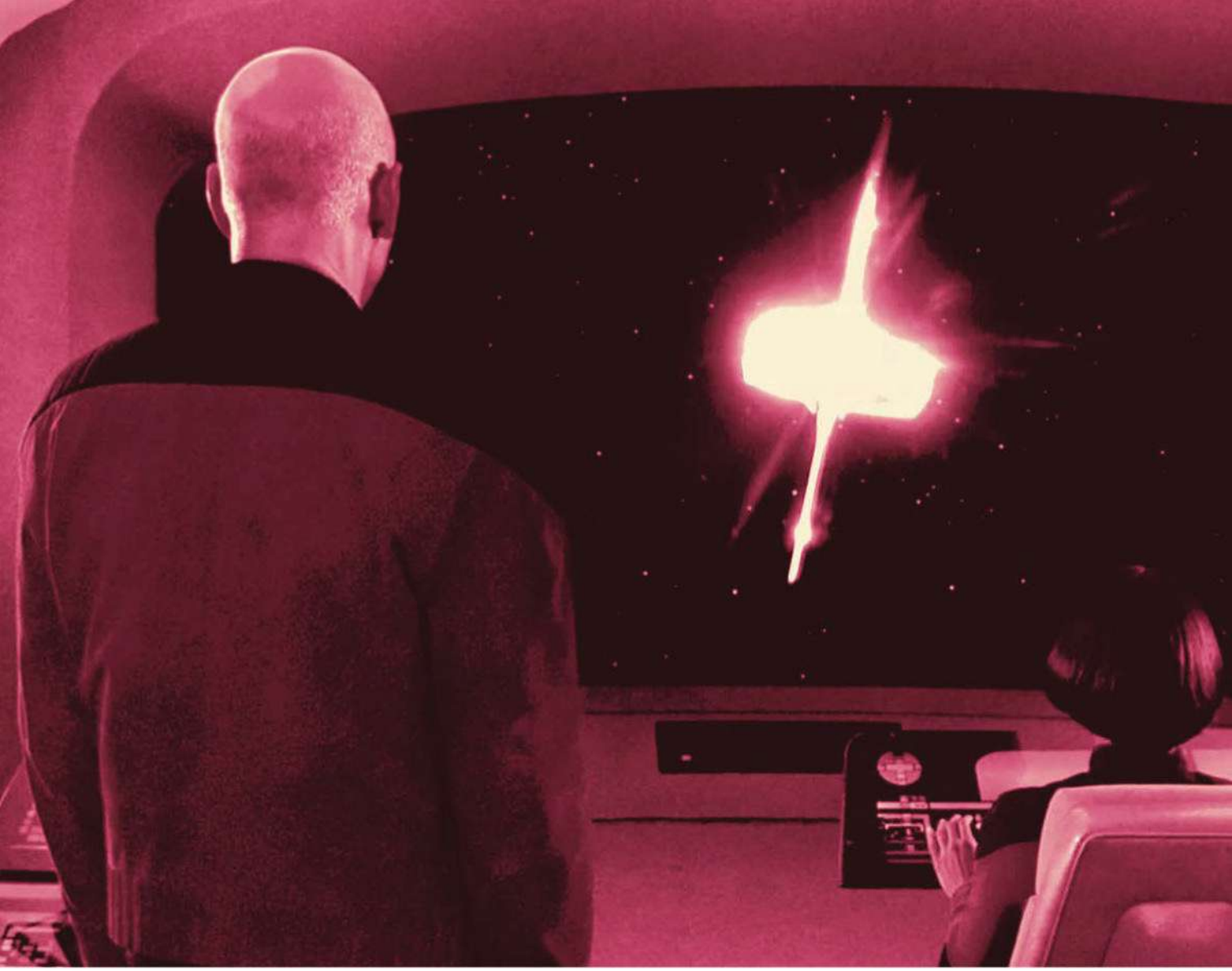
Odette's heart soared. By weaving her family's legacy into the fabric of her work, she had captured the essence of her culture. The various test subjects' responses were a profound validation of her success for this phase of the project.

* * *

In the final days before the missile launch, Odette spent her time at her father's side, sharing the success of the project. Her father, though weak, smiled with pride. He had outlived the prognosis, but Odette knew he'd be gone any day now.

"You've done something remarkable, Odette. You've ensured that our stories, our very essence, will live on," her father said with a faint but heartfelt smile.

A curious thought lingered in Odette's mind, a whisper of wonder about who might one day step into the shoes of her simulation's protagonist. How would their life, their choices,



IN THIS WORLD, THE ESSENCE OF COMMUNITY, A REFLECTION OF HER GRANDMOTHER ELINE'S NURTURING SPIRIT, PULSED AT THE CORE OF EVERY EXPERIENCE…

intertwine with the fabric of Ressik's legacy? These thoughts occupied her as she prepared for the next phase of the mission.

Odette was stationed in the control center during the launching, her eyes fixed on the telemetry data streaming from the nucleonic beam, the probe's primary payload. The data confirmed it was in an inert, standby mode, the state it was programmed to maintain until the probe encountered a sign of life. This life detection was based on other sensors designed to identify beings with brain structures akin to those of the Kataanians. The probe was also scheduled for a series of in-situ tests while on its trajectory to leave the solar system, a crucial step before its long journey into the unknown. There would be no final test, no certain way to know when or if the nucleonic beam would ever activate – it was a shot in the dark, a leap of faith of and into the cosmos. But the probe needed to be far away, beyond the reach of the impending nova, for any chance of success.

This uncertainty was not just a metaphorical burden for Odette; it was a tangible reflection of the immense temporal and spatial distances that the probe would traverse, a stark reminder that her legacy, encapsulated within its technology, would embark on a journey through both time and space, long outlasting her own existence.

The enormity of this thought lingered in the quiet space of the control center. 'We need the probe to find someone who will be a teacher, someone who could tell the others about us…' Odette thought, unvoiced amidst her colleagues who were each absorbed in their respective tasks, eyes locked on monitors displaying the probe's systems in various levels of activity.

As the missile carrying the legacy matrix soared into the sky, Odette felt a sense of peace. She had fulfilled her duty, not just to her culture but to her family. She had created a legacy that would outlast the nova, a testament to the enduring power of communal connection and the simple beauty of a life well-lived.

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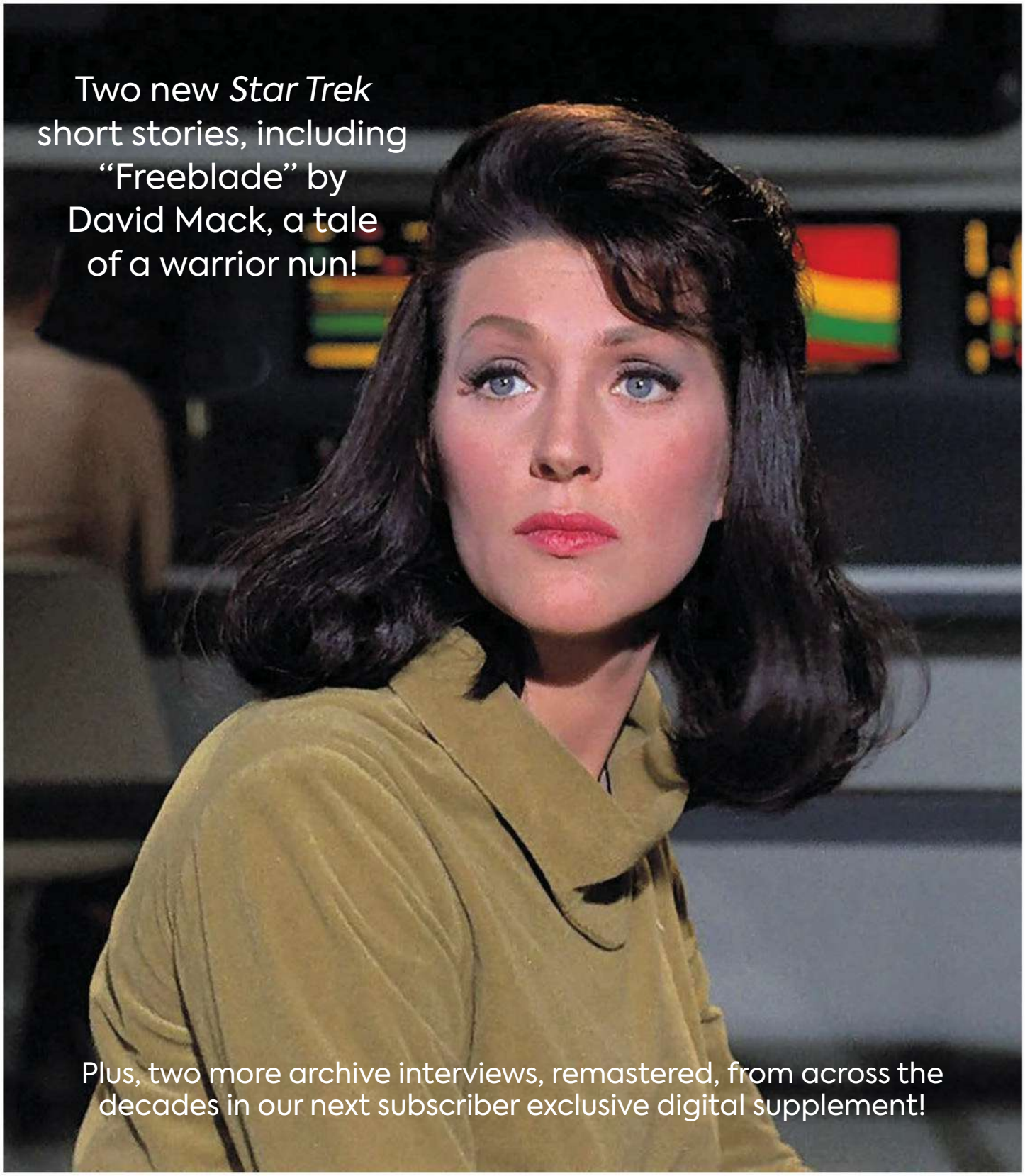
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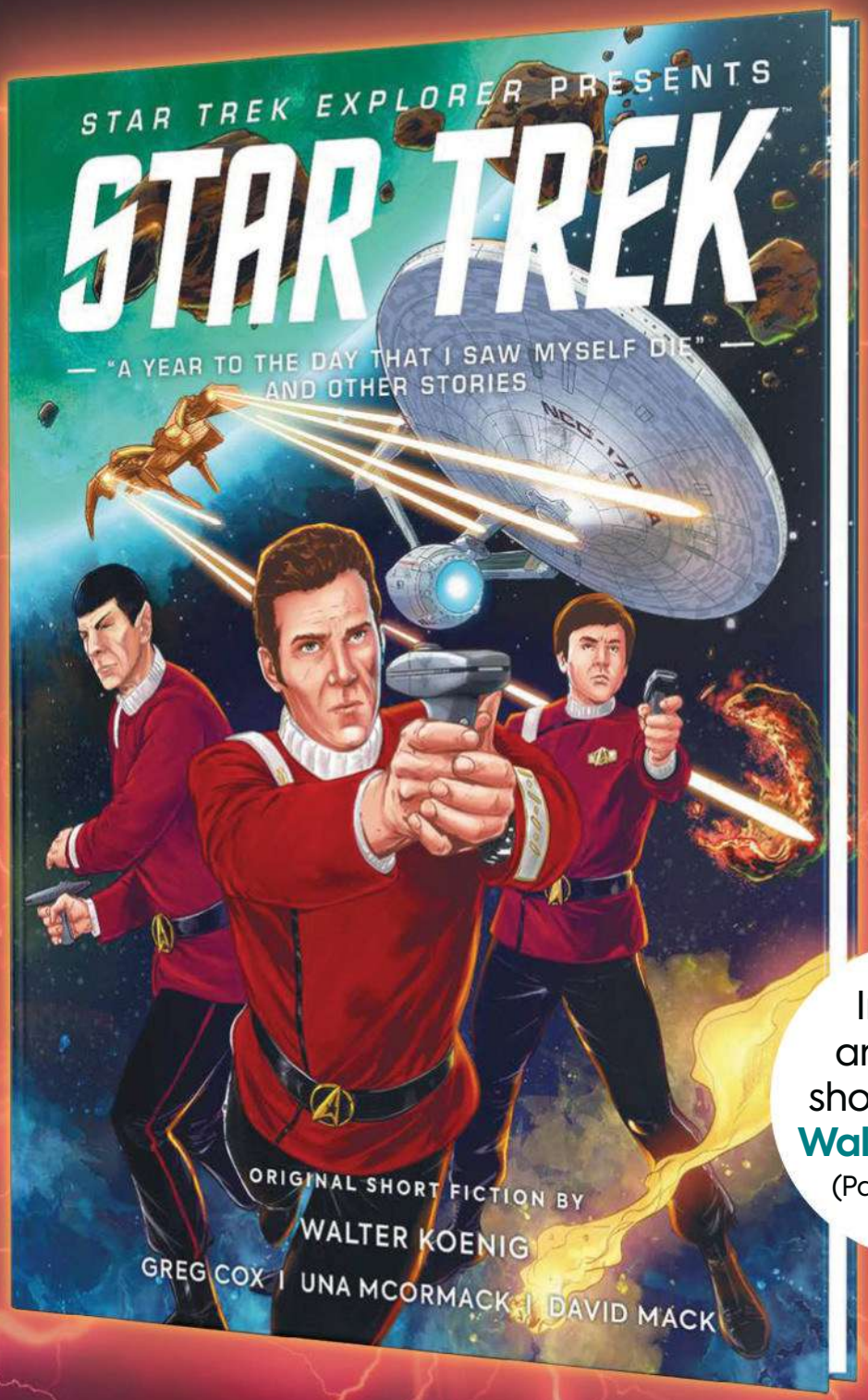
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